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Head Chop: Acéphale and community in the works of Bataille,  
Blanchot, and Nancy.

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Phd Art  
University of Edinburgh  
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J. Fletcher

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# Abstract of Thesis

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*Head Chop* is a practice-led research project exploring the thinking of community found within the works of Georges Bataille, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Maurice Blanchot. Using the central exchange between Nancy and Blanchot, as found in the triple intersection of texts composed of Nancy's *Inoperative Community*, Blanchot's *The Unavowable Community*, and finally Nancy's recent *The Disavowed Community*, *Head Chop* draws upon the interfaces of these three works to develop a reading of community.

Utilising the concept of fictioning, an imaging of possible worlds, as its primary methodology, *Head Chop* develops a narrativised analysis of community. The story of Acéphale, Bataille's secret society, provides the structuring fiction of the work. This story is developed from a synthesis of fragmentary accounts of the Acéphale group's sacrificial ambition, and the illustrations of the Acéphale journal. The result is a tale of a human sacrifice from which the being Acéphale subsequently arises.

In tracing the relation of the work of Nancy and Blanchot to the work of Bataille, *Head Chop* draws attention to the role of the figure of Acéphale for Bataille, and its subsequent insinuation in the work of Nancy and Blanchot. The figure of Acéphale operates as an editorial device that structures and informs the readings of these works as a common grounding and central problematic. This situates the readings of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot in a contested frame of

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reference by attempting to accommodate an alternate version of the sacrificial event.

*Head Chop* finds a basis for its methodological investigation in Deleuze and Guattari's work *What is Philosophy?* Excising and developing a series of figures and conceptual tools from the works of Nancy, Blanchot and Bataille, *Head Chop* develops a crossing of these figures and concepts as characters within the broader narrative of Acéphale.

Following this methodological approach, *Head Chop* traces series of connected concepts in the works of Nancy and Blanchot. In developing these connections in relation to the Acéphale narrative, conceptual structures engaged in the thinking of community are drawn out into the broader contexts of Nancy and Blanchot's work. These connections are traced in Nancy through addressing such notions as the deconstruction of the subject, the question of authenticity in Heidegger, a re-reading of Heideggeran ontology that privileges *Mitsein*, and the singular plural. In Blanchot conceptual connections are similarly traced, beginning from the foundational role of the other, the challenging passion of lovers, through to death, unworking, and the question of testimony.

In developing a narrativised analysis of the figure of Acéphale, *Head Chop* aims to open new channels of inquiry into the concept of community as it arises between the works of Bataille, Blanchot and Nancy.

## Research questions:

How does a re-imaging of the Acéphale story, in which Acéphale is begotten, engage with Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot's readings of community?

What is to be gained from the use of a re-imagined Acéphale story in a thinking of community?

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# Introduction

*Head Chop* is a work of interdisciplinary, experimental writing that seeks to develop a critical engagement with the idea of community developed in the works of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot. The work focuses upon four central research topics: 1) the Acéphale group and their work relating to a proposed human sacrifice, 2) Jean-Luc Nancy's *The Inoperative Community*, 3) Maurice Blanchot's *The Unavowable Community*, 4) Jean-Luc Nancy's *The Disavowed Community*.

Each of the four research topics articulates an engagement with community closely aligned to the other four. Thus Bataille's Acéphale project is invoked in Nancy's *The Inoperative Community* and Blanchot's *The Unavowable Community*, whilst Blanchot's work is also developed in direct response to Nancy's. These engagements are given a form of speculative completion with the recent publication of Nancy's *The Disavowed Community*, which constitutes Nancy's belated, substantive reply to Blanchot.

*Head Chop* makes use of the methodology of fictioning, determined here as the 'imagining and imaging' (O'Sullivan, 2016a, 212) of possible worlds, to develop an interrogation of the central research question: how does a re-imagining of the Acéphale story, in which Acéphale is begotten, engage with Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot's readings of community?

*Head Chop* develops a narrative-driven interrogation of this research question through a repeated telling of a re-imagining of the Acéphale story in which the being Acéphale arises from the sacrifice. My use of this method allows a sustained engagement of each of the four research topics through the re-imagined story. In developing this analysis I aim to construct a framework for generative engagement

with each of the central research sources. Displacement of the focus from conceptual analysis to a broader register that engages with affective and figural dimensions of the research sources is driven by the use of a narrative frame. My approach is staked upon the claim that the central research sources exist in multi-modal registers, thus themselves necessitating a mode of address that can be attentive to the proliferation of registers. *Head Chop* is thus developed as a book-form, a mode I contend is appropriate to the critical structures developed in the work.

In making reference to conceptual and affective dimensions *Head Chop* draws upon Deleuze & Guattari's *What is Philosophy?* The work uses the schema from *What is Philosophy?* to construct an engagement of multiple registers within the research sources that, critically, Deleuze & Guattari outline as existing as distinct forms of thought<sup>1</sup>. In drawing upon this schema of forms of thought I aim to foreground the critical dimensions of figural/affective registers. *Head Chop* does this by engaging with the expanded registers utilised by Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot through a re-imagining of the Acéphale story. Through this approach I intend for *Head Chop* to develop a new engagement with the interrelated modes of thinking community.

### *Fictioning*

*Head Chop* draws upon the methodological approach of fictioning. This approach is derived from the descriptive terminology of O'Sullivan (2014, 2016a, 2016b), in order to develop a critical strategy that is grounded by the premise of the '*imagining and imaging of alternatives*' (O'Sullivan, 2016a, 212). Alternatives are taken here as

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<sup>1</sup> Deleuze & Guattari outline three 'forms of thought': the figural, the conceptual and the functional. Each form of thought intersects with the world in a different manner, thus elaborating a specific mode of access. These modes of access have disciplinary homes, the figure in art, the concept in philosophy, the function in science.

possible worlds, constituted by the ‘production of untimely images’ (O’Sullivan, 2016b, 83) that gesture towards these different possibilities. Untimely images are outlined in O’Sullivan as having a spatial constitution, a quality of ‘speaking back’ to their producer, and a temporal quality of accretion, in which the images develop a complexity through progressive layering. The production of untimely images within an already existing world creates a tension in the already existent world-as-it-is, this for O’Sullivan is the mythopoeitic dimension of fictioning, ‘the imaginative transformation of the world’ (2016b, 86). The production of untimely images can thus function as a critical counterpoint to the world-as-it-is. Deployed in an already coded world, fictioning offers a way of thinking of imagined possibilities that come as if other worldly because of their apparent disengagement from the coding of the world-as-it-is. Such possibilities participate in the world-as-it-is, but precisely through appearing as untimely (the oddities of speaking back and opacity) open the constitution of the world-as-it-is to contest. The imagined possibilities of fictioning can thus be construed as critical gestures through their disruptive and contesting quality.

Fictioning proposes a critical strategy for exposing the already-fictional ‘reality’ of the world-as-it-is by making apparent the contingency of world upon the coding process. In proposing new imagined possibilities, fictioning offers alternate models of future worlds. Fictioning thus has a promissory dimension, as well as a deeply generative mode of operation in which the possible is the dominant factor<sup>2</sup>. The process of the exposure of the already-fictional world is given the designation ‘myth-science’ by O’Sullivan (2016a, 212), a critical nomenclature for the gesture that seeks

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<sup>2</sup> O’Sullivan’s work draws upon Deleuze’s observations on the temporality of art: that ‘its people are missing’ (O’Sullivan, 2016b, 82)



to expose by performing symmetrical operations that run counter to the dominant codes of the world. This exposure thus constitutes a kind of contagion of world that demands of fictioning a pre-established relation, which I contend gives a burden to the methodology to be attentive to the already deployed ‘possible worlds’ that are interrogated and restructured<sup>3</sup>.

In making use of fictioning as methodology, I introduce a tension between the development of ‘myth-science’ as a constituent component and the counterpoint of Nancy’s critical engagement with myth <sup>4</sup>(itself drawn from Bataille<sup>5</sup>) as a problematic force in philosophy. *Head Chop* thus writes the research sources back into the methodological approach by restructuring the act of fictioning and its development of possible worlds as an always interrupted process of narration. Fictioning must thus act as an exposure then interruption of world through its untimely and otherworldly qualities, rather than simply offering the establishment of an alternate myth. I contend that this would always already be the case in fictioning because the exposing process draws attention to the coding of world, which, drawing from Bataille, would expose the myth of the absence of myth.

Fictioning as methodology is used to develop the initial re-imagining of the Acéphale story, enabling the description of a different possible world of the sacrificial gesture. Through a fictioning of research sources associated with the Acéphale group – led by the Acéphale journal – I establish an initial re-imagined narrative of Acéphale. In following the internal narrative structure of the Acéphale images and supplemental research sources, I propose the possibility of the sacrificial gesture being staged to beget Acéphale. Fictioning in this instance allows the narrative to take on expanded

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<sup>3</sup> Such a structure is also tied to the opacity of untimely images

<sup>4</sup> See *Myth Interrupted* in Nancy, J-L (1991).

<sup>5</sup> See *The Absence of Myth* in Bataille, G. (1994) This opaque work draws out the critical dimensions at the basis of Nancy’s work on myth., most notably the ‘myth of the absence of myth.’

dimensions that are permissive of a post-mortem arising and heavenly ascent of Acéphale. Fictioning thus enables the possibility of a revised narrative form that is internally consistent with the Acéphale journals, whilst also allowing the introduction of a new, research-informed developmental schema for the Acéphale story.

Following its use in re-imagining the Acéphale story, fictioning establishes a basis for two subsequent developments. Firstly fictioning permits the testing of research sources against the new possible of the re-imagined Acéphale story, generating new channels of enquiry through the re-interrogation of sources that draw upon it. Fictioning thus allows an expanded scope for interrogation of research sources by displacing the existent narrative structure and making new demands of the research sources.

Secondly, fictioning allows my interrogation of community to push into an expanded register. Fictioning forces a renewed focus by emphasising the narrative dimension of the Acéphale story, as well as its operational function in the works of Blanchot and Nancy on community. In emphasising the role of the Acéphale narrative and its circulation within accounts of community, fictioning engenders a shift in the discursive connections between accounts, forcing the exchanges onto the terrain of a hypothesised, narrative-driven act. I argue that this allows fictioning to develop a novel mode of access to the connected engagements with community of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot. This mode of access also gives scope for *Head Chop* to be attentive to the breadth of registers that the research sources employ. Such an expansion of the realm of critical register finds a series of correspondent gestures in the works of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot. These gestures take the form of extended modes of critical engagement such as diaristic, epistolary, fragmentary or drunken registers.

I employ the methodology of fictioning for a number of reasons: 1) the Acéphale group, their proposed sacrifice and the Acéphale journals are all keyed to a structure of the possible or imagined worlds: the sacrifice is a provocative, future-oriented gesture, it takes place in the context of Bataille's work as an exemplar of a re-ordering of the world. Such an analysis is cognate with the concept of fictioning as an imagining of possible worlds. 2) Fictioning as methodology is able to accommodate the complex registers of the works of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot and their deployment of modes that test the limits of possible worlds. 3) The engagements with community in Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot are all structured by the possible: all attempt to think community beyond its contemporary social and historical conditions through propositions that stage untimely possibles against the world-as-it-is (perhaps none more radical than Bataille).

My use of fictioning as methodology draws influence from Deleuze and Guattari and their work *Kafka: towards a minor literature*. Deleuze and Guattari deploy a process of reading that is itself influenced by the internal consistencies of Kafka's work. This reading approach rejects the superficial whole for a small point of access that offers the opportunity to trace conceptual lineages in Kafka's work. For Deleuze and Guattari the bent head and the straightened head, as two counterposed figures in Kafka's work, offer a way to think the destabilisation of 'bi-univocal' relations<sup>6</sup>. The figure/affect led reading of Kafka's work allows the development of complex chains of affective resonances that open new dimensions for reading Kafka. This approach informs my deployment of fictioning as methodology in *Head Chop*.

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<sup>6</sup> See pp.3-8, two concordances are structured in Deleuze & Guattari: the bent head-portrait photo and the straightened head-musical cacophony. Such correspondences break apart bi-univocality because the cacophony is a 'sonorous intensity' that overflows the correspondent relations, leaving a structure that can't contain the material to which it is indexed. Such a situation of necessity disrupts any 'superficial whole' by providing an always-excess.

By providing a pattern of figure-led reading, Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka* highlights the critical possibilities of shifting the terrain of reading to engender tensions within the research sources themselves. For Deleuze and Guattari this leads to an analysis of Kafka that identifies the political import of Kafka's work, as well as the broader possibility of a minor literature that enacts this political immediacy.

Overall, fictioning deployed as an interdisciplinary methodology allows *Head Chop* to navigate a conceptual problematic rooted in (continental) philosophy through the registers of practice-led research. I claim that my use of an interdisciplinary approach offers a liberal space for the foregrounding of the singularity of voice, a register that draws upon the resources of Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka* to establish its critical function. Developed as a work of practice-led research, *Head Chop* takes liberties with the registers of criticality, aiming through the methodology of fictioning to establish a voice that can function in the interdisciplinary space the work explores.

#### *Four nodes*

*Head Chop* uses the methodology of fictioning to trace the traversal of the figure of Acéphale through four constructed nodes, each of which is constituted by a specific account of community. 1) The first is composed from Bataille's work, developing initially around his work in relation to the Acéphale group, before extending into the broader body of Bataille's work. 2) The second is anchored to Nancy's book *The Inoperative Community*, which in part picks up Bataille's work on community and the scenography of the Acéphale group. 3) The third is centred on Blanchot's work *The Unavowable Community*, which develops a critical counterpoint to Nancy's work in *The Inoperative Community*. 4) The fourth node is found in Nancy's more recent work *The Disavowed Community* (2016), written as a belated response to Blanchot's work.

These four nodes are approached through the re-imagined narrative of Acéphale in order to trace the implications of an arisen Acéphale for the discourse on community developed in each of the works.

Each of the four nodes is initially constituted by an engagement with a central text:

### 1) Bataille

My reading of Bataille's work is driven by his engagement with the Acéphale group. This engagement is addressed with two specific focuses in the work: the first addresses the Acéphale journals; the second addresses the proposed sacrificial offering.

These first of these initial two focuses provides an outline of a series of key stakes in Bataille's thought, for example I chart his engagements with Nietzsche, sacrificial economy, the sacred/profane and inner experience, as well as offer up a broader context for Bataille's work by situating it in relation to other members of the group<sup>7</sup>. The group's avowed aims to 'fight for the decomposition and exclusion of all communities – national, socialist, communist, or churchly – other than universal community'(Bataille, 1986k) provides further contextualisation of the Acéphale project and its possible relations to the latter-staged concepts of community that touch upon it. The political dimensions of the group's gestures, its existence falling between 1936-39, must also be remarked in order to situate the gestures as a critical repudiation of fascism<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Contributors to the Acéphale journals included Andre Masson, Pierre Klossowski, Jean Rollin and Roger Caillois.

<sup>8</sup> See Bataille's *Creation of the 'Internal Journal'*: 'WHAT IS TO BE DONE?/IN THE FACE OF FASCISM/GIVEN THE INADEQUACY OF COMMUNISM/We propose to meet in order to consider the problems/encountered by those who are currently/radically opposed to fascist

My second initial focus provides the driving component of the research. I contend that the human sacrifice proposed by the group finds its most purposive dimension when considered as a thought experiment. *Head Chop* thus seeks to lodge the sacrificial scene in a point of indecision where the question of the veracity of the accounts is superseded by the possibilities that can be drawn from the proposition as a provocative gesture<sup>9</sup>. My approach towards the sacrifice finds its narrative structure in the illustrations by Andre Masson that run throughout each issue of the journal. These images narrate an adventure of the headless being Acéphale, a figure that was used as an emblem of the group. *Head Chop* re-imagines the proposed sacrifice as a process of begetting Acéphale.

This sacrificial offering can be read in the wider context of Bataille's work as an engagement with a form of sacrificial economy that plays out some of the dimensions of the potlatch that Bataille draws from Mauss's work on gift economy<sup>10</sup>. In this way the sacrificial offering mobilises a whole form of political economy outlined in Bataille's three-volume work *The Accursed Share*. Concomitantly, the sacrificial proposition engages themes from Bataille's work such as a-theology and inner experience<sup>11</sup> as method, as well transgression<sup>12</sup>, the sacred/profane<sup>13</sup>, and the political and economic

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aggression/unreservedly hostile to bourgeois domination/but can no longer trust in communism.' (Bataille, 2017, 167-8)

<sup>9</sup> This finds a correspondence in the approaches to criticality fostered within the Acéphale group. The opening text by Bataille in Acéphale 1 states: 'WE ARE FEROCIOUSLY RELIGIOUS and, to the extent that our existence is the condemnation of everything that is recognised today, an inner exigency demands that we be equally imperious. What we are starting is a war' (Bataille, 1985, 179). Such a proposal demonstrates the concern for radical modes of efficacy.

<sup>10</sup> Perhaps most clearly elucidated in Bataille's work *The Accursed Share Vol.1* and *Tears of Eros*, see Bataille, G. (2007a) & (1989a). See also Mauss, M. (1990).

<sup>11</sup> See Bataille, G. (1988), (2011) & (2016).

<sup>12</sup> See Bataille, G. (2012a).

<sup>13</sup> See Bataille, G. (2007a) & (2007b).

dimensions of homogeneity and heterogeneity<sup>14</sup>. The sacrificial offering can thus be read as a method of reinvigorating events resistant to the homogeneous, profane and means-driven economy that Bataille identifies as a prevalent and destructive force<sup>15</sup>. The aim taken at fascism in the *Acéphale* journals demands a careful reading in relation to the sacrificial gesture and its mobilisation of destruction. The Bataillean sacrificial schema slips here between on the one hand a renunciation of fascism and the logic of a death put to work (which Nancy will later identify as a central characteristic of fascist instrumentalisation of community) and on the other an ambiguous and difficult form of resistance to fascistic imperatives that goes beyond instrumentalised violence. The challenge Bataille grapples with is one of finding the appropriate modality for the destructive imperatives advocated by the group. This problematic in Bataille appears in the tension between a celebration of violence, destruction and transgression in the name of the heterogeneous, and the contemporaneous mobilisation of these forms for homogeneous ends.

I propose that these tensions, operational in Bataille's work, open questions of political import that still have resonance in our contemporary political context. The sacrificial gesture is thus by no means a simple provocation of historical curiosity, but rather offers a rich and complex ground to engage with Bataille's work and the concept of community more broadly. The sacrificial scene is given the burden of becoming a founding image of a project intimately linked to instantiating a radical mode of engaging with community by Nancy and Blanchot's subsequent use of the story as an analytic tool. I contend that

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<sup>14</sup> See Bataille, G. (2012b).

<sup>15</sup> This theme is most clearly developed in Volume 1 of Bataille's *The Accursed Share*, see Bataille, G. (2007a).

through this process the proposed sacrifice becomes a kind of primal scene of re-thinking community. It is within this logic that *Head Chop* seeks to re-imagine and re-energise the scene.

## 2) Nancy

My first engagement with Nancy's work is focussed upon *The Inoperative Community*, an essay first published in *alea* in 1983<sup>16</sup>, and subsequently composed into the 1991 translated volume of the same name. Nancy's *The Inoperative Community* opens out the question of community through a series of conceptual problematics that challenge presumptions that Nancy identifies at the heart of the concept. In brief, Nancy rejects the concept of community as a collective totality, a structure which it is claimed is subject to instrumentalisation through being put to work. Such a structure finds a real-world correlate for Nancy in the fascist paroxysm of Nazism and its myths of purification<sup>17</sup>. Nancy suspends the totalising and operationalised model of community for a mode developed on the patterning of the concept of the singular plural, an each time singularity that resists totalisation and the additive structure that Nancy claims is presupposed of community. Community in Nancy is thus given a political programme through its requirement to resist instrumentalisation and refuse a passive constitution.

The concept of the singular plural finds a critical resource in Heidegger's ontology and its use of the concept of *Mitsein*, being-with, which is posed by Nancy as co-essential with *Dasein*. Nancy uses this structure of the co-essential

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<sup>16</sup> An initial outline of the origins of the work and the context of Blanchot's response are found in Nancy's *Confronted Community*, see Nancy, J.-L. (1993c).

<sup>17</sup> See Lacoue-Labarthe, P. & Nancy, J.-L. (1990).



to do two things to Heidegger: 1) to invert the conventional precedence of *Dasein* over *Mitsein*, thus producing a pluralised ontology<sup>18</sup> that finds its expression in the singular plural; 2) to provide a mode of approaching the work of Heidegger that is critically aware of the shadow of Heidegger's fascist associations and the critical-heroic narrative of *Dasein*.

The figure of Acéphale, with its re-imagined narrative constitution, is used to develop a critical reading of Nancy's work. From out of this central focus, *Head Chop* extends the initial context of the Acéphale narration into the wider context of Nancy's work. My reading of Nancy is thus directed by the figure of Acéphale, which traces relations through the broader body of Nancy's philosophy. These connections take such forms as the concept of the singular plural, inoperativity, areality, the heart, intoxication, and sleep. I make use of the methodology of fictioning as a critical mode of re-reading Nancy's work on community through a renewed narrative, as well as a mode of further developing relationships between Nancy's thought of community and the wider body of his work.

### 3) Blanchot

The third node is focussed on Blanchot's work *The Unavowable Community*, first published in 1983 and subsequently translated in 1988, which is developed as a response to Nancy's initial essay *The Inoperative Community*. The first chapter of the book *The Negative Community* is an extended commentary on community that begins as a response to Nancy's work *The Inoperative*

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<sup>18</sup> Nancy shifts the ontological burden to the patterning of –with, which for Nancy renders a reading of Heidegger's ontology as offering a fundamental ethics. See Nancy, J.-L. (2002b) & Nancy, J.-L. (2008a)

*Community*. The second chapter *The Community of Lovers* is a commentary on Marguerite Duras's recit *The Malady of Death* (1986).

The first section of Blanchot's book is structured around a critical engagement with Nancy's thought in relation to Bataille. Blanchot picks up Nancy's critique of the absolute immanence of a fusional community, a process Blanchot acknowledges is predicated on the individual 'himself perpetually repeated' (1988, 3). This terrain is modulated in Blanchot by a shift to a Levinasian register where absolute immanence of fusional community is refused for community constituted by the dissymmetry of an ethical relation. This relation lodges community into a register in which what is common is not built on the additive impulse of totality, but rather on the very impossibility of totality that is developed in Levinas. Blanchot thus proposes a counter-reading of Bataille in which community finds a form distinct from the ontological model Nancy proposes.

In the second chapter of the book, *The Community of Lovers*, Blanchot lodges the question of community firmly up against the relation of lovers, but does so through an insistent focus on writing<sup>19</sup>. What takes place is an intensification of the question, and a testing of limits, of community conducted through a reading of *The Malady of Death*. In the relation of lovers is found a mode of engaging with community that appears to be structurally alien to the ethical relation as a basis. Between lovers is a relation of passion that exceeds the law of ethical obligation, a passion more intense than the dissymmetry of the ethical relation. This passion is the embrace of one and another at the cost of

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<sup>19</sup> An analysis already implicated in the question of community from the first chapter: 'Hence the foreboding that the community, in its very failure, is linked to a certain kind of writing' (Blanchot, 1988, 12)

all others. Yet in this oblivion Blanchot finds an ephemeral figure of community, a form sympathetic to Bataille's negative community. This figure plays out a relation maintained at the height of passionate abandon, the very relation Blanchot situates as the most proper comprehension of the Acéphale sacrifice<sup>20</sup>.

The book offers two refrains on Bataille's community. Community maintained through the ethical relation, and the community of lovers as an extreme tension of this relation. The two parts of the book thus articulate a tension between an abstraction of speculative enquiry and the intensity of love as relation of mutual abandon, a tension that finds a correlate in the Levinasian engagement with ethics: metaphysical inquisition and an imploring visage. Thus in some sense the book plays out a model of Levinas in its very structure.

There is a critical distance between Nancy and Blanchot drawn out across the terrain of the constitution of the ethical relation: Blanchot retains the face to face of Levinasian ethics; Nancy draws upon the ontological resource of *Mitsein* from Heidegger<sup>21</sup>.

My reading of Blanchot's work on community develops from an initial close reading of *The Unavowable Community* to a tracing of the wider resonances of the re-articulated thought of community within Blanchot's work. This process is again developed through the methodology of fictioning and the re-imagined Acéphale story.

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<sup>20</sup> Blanchot claims the most proper logic of the Acéphale sacrifice is to be found in the passionate abandon of the group, rather than through sacrifice as the taking of a life. For Blanchot the human sacrifice would become mere parody, a death put to work and thus mobilising precisely that which the sacrifice aims to challenge.

<sup>21</sup> See Bernasconi, R. (1993) for a more fulsome analysis of the tensions between Levinasian and Heideggerean heritages in Blanchot and Nancy. See also Rugo, D. (2013).

#### 4) Return

The fourth node is built around Nancy's recent work *The Disavowed Community* (2016), seeking to draw this new contribution to the exchanges around community into a reading contextualised by the work with which it shares a common heritage. *The Disavowed Community* is also drawn into the specific context of the re-imagined Acéphale story through its engagement by the same methodological frame of fictioning as each of the other nodes. *The Disavowed Community* is thus placed into the lineage of analysis developed through the re-imagining of the Acéphale story.

*The Disavowed Community* comes as Nancy's response to Blanchot. The book develops a close and exacting reading of Blanchot's *The Unavowable Community*, seeking to engage with the overt as well as buried challenges Blanchot addresses to Nancy. The question of inoperativity is returned to in an attempt to respond to Blanchot's critique; sacrifice and the reading of Bataille again become critical points to be navigated<sup>22</sup>. Throughout Nancy teases out the problematic of the ethical relation in Blanchot, drawing on the theme of lovers and a motif that Nancy claims traverses the whole of Blanchot's text: the heart or the law. This motif provides a substantive basis for Nancy's response, capturing a complexity at the centre of Blanchot's work. The heart or the law crystallises the tension between passion and ethical obligation into a complex motif (the overbidding passion of love and the obligation of the face to face address). Nancy traces the resonances of this motif in Blanchot's work, from his engagement with Levinas to his shifting political allegiances<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> It is in this space that Nancy acknowledges the problematics of reading 'a politics into Bataille,' and the error of not addressing Bataille's work during the Acéphale years.

<sup>23</sup> Nancy tracks the resonances of a politics in Blanchot, from the right-wing allegiances of the 30s to the leftist disposition of the 60s.

As the fourth and final node of analysis, *The Disavowed Community* is used as a conduit to draw together the analytic threads of the other three accounts. Nancy's engagement with Blanchot completes a circuit of conversance that affords the opportunity to revisit the critical framing of the debate. To do this *Head Chop* draws together the re-imagining of Acéphale with a meditation on the mutual engagement of each of the four nodes. The final node thus acts as a form of speculative conclusion, affording a space to open out the possible trajectories of a re-invigorated engagement with the thought of community, as well as establishing an initial trajectory from which arisen Acéphale can find new areas of engagement.

### *Testing the re-imagined story*

I have developed a strategy of exploring the critical resonances of Acéphale arising through testing the figure of Acéphale against each of the four nodes. Fictioning is used to structure this testing by providing a narrative account of the arising, through which I elaborate a structure that develops as a pattern of engagement with each of the four nodes. *Head Chop* is thus able to act as a sustained, repeat meditation on the re-imagined story of the sacrifice of Acéphale and subsequent arising. I contend that in each process of re-narrating the story, Acéphale takes on the critical, exegetical burden of the work, acting as an exploratory probe that pushes at the contours of established critical account through the newly problematized 'primal scene' of community that lingers in the four nodal points.

In moving through each of the four nodes, Acéphale comes to form a compound of shattered images, gathering from each traversal a repository of material that enables the arisen figure of Acéphale to act as a critical conduit for the navigation

of the discursive account of community developed between Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot. Such a procedure allows for the refocusing of this specific lineage of thinking community into the figure, which in turn is permissive of an expanded register of critical approach established through the use of fictioning. In developing this approach I aim to establish a novel mode of access to the problematics of community through a register that I contest is apposite to the diverse modes of the works of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot.

In constructing a reading of the four nodal points *Head Chop* plays out a continued repetition of the scene of Bataille's proposed sacrificial gesture. This repetition allows the development of a process of testing, in which source material is tested against the revised Acéphale narrative. This approach allows for the structuring of the hypothesised arising of Acéphale through each work utilising the sacrificial scene as a provocation to think community. *Head Chop* thus stages an exploration of how the proposition of the revised story of Acéphale spills into each engagement with community.

Fictioning as a methodology allows licence for a focus on figure and affect<sup>24</sup>, which in turn enables a tracing of the figural resonances traversing each specific node. In tracing these interlinked dimensions I use fictioning to provide a world in which specific parts of the thought of community can be traced into the broader contexts of the research. For example, Blanchot's work on community can be traced into reflections on ecstasy, testimony, witnessing, recollection, law, passion and ethics, whilst Nancy's can be traced to myth, sleep, tremors, drunkenness, ontology, sense, the world and the body. These conceptual and affective dimensions are all pulled into the account of community through a reading process that traces correspondences, a

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<sup>24</sup> Following Deleuze & Guattari's schema in *What is Philosophy?*.

process facilitated by the methodology of fictioning. Correspondent chains are developed through fictioning that adhere to the figure of Acéphale: the heart and the blade held aloft, the sacred and the profane, the eternal fire and the purely abstract, the heart and the law, passion and abandonment, politics and revolution, democratic law and revolutionary fervour. These figural connections develop a rich range of conceptual resonances that I propose give the figure of Acéphale a substantial critical reserve, whilst Acéphale concurrently functions as a site to explore the clashes and mutual interplays of these conceptual problematics and allegiances that arise when works are situated in close proximity to one another.

Drawing a revised narrative of Acéphale out of the Acéphale journals provides the opportunity to develop an expanded critical exegesis of Bataille's work in relation to the Acéphale group, subsequently offering the ability to interrogate the connected research sources. Such a process also functions as a recuperative gesture by insisting upon the proposed sacrifice as a decisive juncture for engaging with community. This gesture functions as a re-imagining of critical material by exposing thought to the pressures of an interloping figure in Acéphale. My intention is to create new incisions in the research sources that enable novel relations and possibilities to be drawn out. This rationale accounts for the narrative vigilance of the project, which is closely attentive to source material in order to structure the narrative conditions through which the primary four nodes are interrogated.

The replication of Bataille's proposed sacrificial scene embodies a pathological insistence on consistency. In *Head Chop* insistence on narrative fidelity pulls each of the four nodes into relationships closely structured around the re-imagined Acéphale story. This approach foregrounds the figural and affective dimensions of thought that are engaged through narrative form. Within this structure

is also a secondary rationale for the move towards the expanded, interdisciplinary register that the work mobilises. I contend that Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot all develop complex, multi-modal bodies of work that eschew singular forms or methodologies for approaches towards key problematics through expanded registers. Bataille writes in ecstatic, diaristic, critical and exegetical, political and economic, and fictive and poetic modes<sup>25</sup>. Running through such registers are commonalities of concern that exceed direct correspondences within a single mode of address. In Nancy philosophical modes of enquiry slip into fragments of intoxicated conversation, torpid narrations of sleep, reflections on art anchored by the image as a dominant mode, fragmentary texts, personal meditations and epistolary forms<sup>26</sup>. Inquisitions again trace motifs of thought through diverse registers. In Blanchot fragmented critical writings meet with literary analyses, fictional and testimonial texts split registers of enquiry into multiple interrogative forms, and fragments and voices proliferate<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> Bataille's work *Inner Experience*, the first book of the three-part project of outlining an a-theology, makes an attempt to engage with ecstatic modes of communication, a structure that in itself problematizes the very form of the book Bataille seeks to use, see Bataille, G. (1988). Diaristic modes are used in Bataille's *Guilty & Inner Experience*, see Bataille, G. (2011) & (1988). Critical and exegetical modalities are scattered across Bataille's work in his engagement with Nietzsche, Hegel, Mauss etc. The political and economic forms are most clear in Bataille's three-volume work *The Accursed Share* Vol.1, 2 & 3, see Bataille, G. (2007a) & (2007b), providing a political economy keyed to the particular logic of the accursed share. The fictive mode in Bataille contains a critical exemplar of the mixed registers through which Bataille interrogates connected themes, the logics of transgression, waste and the sacred find expositions in works such as *My Mother & The Story of the Eye*, see Bataille, G. (2012a) & (2001b).

<sup>26</sup> Intoxicated conversation is developed in Nancy's interrogation of the register of drunkenness in Plato's Symposium, see Nancy, J.-L. (2016a). Torpid narration is found in Nancy's work *The Fall of Sleep*, see Nancy, J.-L. (2009). Nancy's engagement with art finds its most expansive register in *Multiple Arts: the muses II*, see Nancy, J.-L. (2006). Fragments play out across the body of Nancy's work, perhaps appearing at their most incisive in *Shattered Love*, one of Nancy's accompanying works in the collection *The Inoperative Community*, see Nancy, J.-L. (1991) pp.82-109. Reflective meditation finds a particularly delicate expression in Nancy's work *The Stranger*, see Nancy, J.-L. (2002a), whilst the epistolary form is developed in Nancy's work on Holderlin's aesthetic theory, see Nancy, J.-L. (1993a) pp.58-81.

<sup>27</sup> See for example Blanchot's *The Unavowable Community* for the extended registers of interrogation deployed. Fiction in Blanchot plays an important role in the development of critical interrogations of central ideas: death, narrative, work etc. Testimony and autobiography are critically exercised in Blanchot's *The Instant of my Death*, see Blanchot, M. & Derrida, J. (2000), whilst the fragment as a critical form is deployed in works such as *Awaiting Oblivion*, see Blanchot, M. (1997) and as extended interventions within *The Infinite Conversation*, see Blanchot, M. (1993).



Harboured within each of these multi-faceted modes is a similarly structured pattern of appositeness of address, a desire for registers that enrich critical discourse rather than separate out a specific and singular mode. I propose that within this approach there is a resonance with the methodology of fictioning as an opening out of critical registers. *Head Chop* aims to operate in close proximity to these modes of writing. Seeking to find a sympathetic space alongside, fictioning engages with the richness of registers spread across the three bodies of work that *Head Chop* interrogates.

In utilising a methodological approach derived from the field of contemporary art practice to develop an interrogation of a philosophical problematic, *Head Chop* is situated in an interdisciplinary space. As a practice-led research project, *Head Chop* aims to develop a mode of critical interrogation appropriate to the disciplinary crossing that the work undertakes.

The interdisciplinary approach developed in *Head Chop* is enabled by the use of the methodology of fictioning, which enables an immersive approach to research sources through a tracing of figures and affects that can be subsequently drawn out of the sources into the possible world of arisen Acéphale. The fixation on the figure of Acéphale and insistence on narrative fidelity provides the impetus for this immersive traversal. The singular, each time specific transit of Acéphale through works is privileged. Such a procedure foregrounds the singularity of possible worlds developed through fictioning, and emphasises the singularity of voice that is developed through an interdisciplinary approach. Two concerns enjoin in this strategy: 1) an engagement with the singular and its role in the work of Nancy; 2) a modalising of the minor voice found in Deleuze and Guattari's work *Kafka: towards a minor literature* (1986).

1) The concept of the singular in Nancy is developed as an each time singular<sup>28</sup>, a concept that enables the singular to be pluralised into a compound of singularities. The singular finds specific instantiation in the question of community through Nancy's outline of community as a singular plural proposition, a process that disrupts the totalising and operationalised dimensions which Nancy identifies as conventionally linked to community. The singular is also deployed in Nancy's concept of art, which explores the singular plural as an each time specific zoning of sense<sup>29</sup>. I propose that affective foregrounding can thus find a hypothesised relation to the common through the repeat pattern of the singular plural. The singular in Nancy provides the basis of a foregrounding of the notion of an each time<sup>30</sup>; this patterning of singularity provides an additional impetus for the interdisciplinary nature of the work, situating the writing practice in a domain that aims to press the singular and specific approach taken as an attempt to engage with the demands of singularity mobilised by practice-led research.

2) The singular voice is staged as a critical gesture in Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka*, which identifies in the work of Kafka a political efficacy operative through the structure of the minor voice. The minor voice is an each time singular, specific vocalisation that takes up a position of political immediacy through the cramped space of its operation and the specific socio-economic circumstances in which it is isolated<sup>31</sup>. Refusing dominant discursive structures

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<sup>28</sup> See for example Nancy, J.-L. (1991) pp.26-31, or Nancy, J.-L. (2000) pp.1-101

<sup>29</sup> See Nancy, J.-L. (1996)

<sup>30</sup> See Nancy, J.-L. (2000)

<sup>31</sup> See Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1986). The minor voice, constituting a minor literature, develops through a set of processes. These are outlined in Deleuze and Guattari as the deterritorialisation of language, a cramped space of enunciation closely tied to a political immediacy, and collective enunciation. These processes find cognate forms in Deleuze's elucidation of the stammer and the function of transversality in Guattari as a challenge to enmeshed hierarchies of power. These

for a liberated inventiveness, the minor voice allows the construction of a whole adjunct space of minor literatures. These minor literatures are each time deterritorialised political possibilities. The series of propositions from Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka* provide a template for the pursuit of a singular, minor voice lodged in an interdisciplinary space: an each time singular address of the problem of community through the singular and autonomous figure of Acéphale. Acéphale describes a contesting trajectory through the four nodal points, providing a similar form of adjunct space as the minor literatures Deleuze and Guattari aim to describe, through developing a destabilising approach.

*Head Chop* aims to mobilise the critical accoutrements of the singular, minor voice to foreground the political dimensions of discursive modes that seek to establish their own criticality. To do this I draw upon theoretical propositions from Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka* that outline the premise of a minor voice and its political effectivity.

*Head Chop* does not aim to mimic this voice, and is aware of the limitations of establishing direct correspondences between socially and politically grounded reading of the minor voice in Kafka and its transposition into this work. Rather, *Head Chop* aims to draw upon the critical resources of this voice to draw attention to the merits of the establishment of a singular voice in navigating political discourse from a critical position. *Head Chop* thus relies upon the establishment of a paradigm of critical function for a voice developed within the methodological parameters of fictioning. I contest that possible

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possibilities are structured into O'Sullivan's (2016a) elaboration of fictioning as 'possible weapons' for deployment in an overall strategy of fictioning as resistance.

worlds enable a possibility for interdisciplinary criticality, and one mode of this is identified in Kafka by Deleuze and Guattari. A mode such as this enables the reading method utilised by Deleuze and Guattari in Kafka by providing a frame for focussing on conceptual traces and affective resonances, rather than the ‘superficiality of the whole’ that Deleuze and Guattari identify as that which they are reading against. I argue that there is thus the potential for possible worlds to intertwine with the critical form of the minor voice.

The Acéphale story exists as an experimental form, at once both provocative thought experiment and published journal. It is a mode of critique that tests disciplinary limits and engages with experimental modes to push critical registers into new heights. In *Head Chop* I propose that the sacrifice operates as a highly experimental mode of critique. As possibility, provocation and testing ground for ideas, the Acéphale group’s proposition itself foregrounds the generative dimensions of an interdisciplinary mode of critical practice. *Head Chop* seeks to draw upon this heritage to establish a sympathetic mode of reading the Acéphale story through a re-telling attentive to its critical dimensions, and subsequent deployment of this re-telling as a critical device. *Head Chop* thus seeks to test disciplinary limits and build an experimental mode of address aiming to develop alternate modes of engagement with the thought of community in Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot.

### *Criteria for success*

*Head Chop* sets out to engage with five central criteria:

- 1) to re-imagine the narrative of the Acéphale story from research sources (Acéphale journals, Bataille’s work in and around the Acéphale group)

2) to use Acéphale and the methodology of fictioning to engage in an analysis of the discursive relations between the articulations of community by Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot.

3) to re-animate Acéphale as a figure that could have use value in a contemporary political context by returning to a propositional thinking of community that still demands to be engaged with today.

4) to establish an expanded critical register for developing an analysis of community in the works of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot (a register for which the necessity of is argued).

5) to establish a critical reading of Nancy's *The Disavowed Community* in an expanded register by placing it into relation with the texts with which it engages.

*Head Chop* aims to function as a recuperative gesture by establishing an alternative narration of the story of Acéphale that is compatible with the research sources that present fragmentary accounts of the Acéphale story<sup>32</sup>. *Head Chop* thus sets out to establish a narrative account that is derived from a close reading of research sources. This account is developed as a reading attentive to the breadth of registers across which the proposed sacrifice finds its efficacy.

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<sup>32</sup> Developed from accounts such as the Acéphale journals, the few fragments collected in Bataille's *Oeuvre Complete, Vol. 2*, commentaries from adjunct documents such as Atlas Press' *Encyclopaedia Acephalica* which, although predominantly focused upon DOCUMENTS, contains useful reference material. Additional material is also found in *Undercover Surrealism: Georges Bataille and Documents*, which includes selected translations from DOCUMENTS that provide additional context. Further secondary accounts from works such as Surya's biography of Bataille, remarks by Denis Holier in *Against Architecture*, and Alan Stoekl's preface to the collection *Visions of Excess* support the development of the Acéphale narrative. For the most part material is partial and testimonial. The recently published text *The Sacred Conspiracy* (again Atlas Press) provides additional context to the Acéphale group's activities.

In developing a re-imagined narrative of Acéphale I aim to construct a figure of Acéphale that can accommodate the critical and narrative dimensions of the story of the Acéphale group and the sacrificial gesture. Through this process *Head Chop* is developed as a sustained engagement with the figure of Acéphale and its interventions within the work on community of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot. As such *Head Chop* aims to establish the figure of Acéphale as a tool for critically interrogating the connected discourses on community of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot. *Head Chop* develops a critical reading of the reverberations of the re-imagined Acéphale story within the research sources. It does so in order to develop a critical account of community that runs as an imagined counterpoint to the established discursive structure built around a reading of the sacrifice in which there is no substantive relation between the sacrificial gesture and the illustrated visions of Acéphale. In seeking to establish a counter-narrative of the Acéphale group's sacrifice, *Head Chop* stakes out the generative possibilities of another reading of the Acéphale story built out of a reading of research sources that is closely attentive to images. In doing so *Head Chop* aims to establish a figure of Acéphale that can have agency in the construction of a critical engagement with community. To do this *Head Chop* tests the research sources against the re-imagined account. This testing procedure aims to establish a mode of critical interrogation by experimenting with the critical possibilities of narrative form. Through this process the figure of Acéphale is established as a space for exploring clashes and conjunctions in the respective engagements with community of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot.

Picking up the story of Acéphale and developing a figure for critical interrogation, *Head Chop* also aims to re-energise the esoteric Acéphale story to give it a new prominence in the development of a critical analysis of community. Aiming

to develop new contexts for the application of the Acéphale story, *Head Chop* thus proposes to expose new problematics and new terrain for the discursive interchange between Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot. This gives rise to critical readings such as the role of the heart in Nancy and Blanchot, the function of death in Blanchot, Nancy and Bataille, or the function of a headless being in an ethical schema. These conceptual developments are all articulations of the application of Acéphale as a critical, generative device. *Head Chop* stakes out its criteria for success on the development of such critical interrogations through the consistent application of the re-imagined Acéphale story.

*Head Chop* aims to chart, through the intervention of the newly-arisen figure of Acéphale, the problematics and concordances of the associated readings of community when challenged with a revised narrative of the Acéphale sacrifice. The figure of Acéphale is used to interrogate each work in turn, aiming to establish the manner in which each body of work can accommodate the re-imagined narrative within the conceptual frameworks that develop a reading of community. *Head Chop* thus challenges, through a focused reading of one component, each respective engagement with community to develop responses to the re-imagined narrative. In following through this proposition, *Head Chop* charts the effects of an arisen Acéphale set free to roam within each engagement with community. In identifying and constituting a re-imagined narrative structure in the research sources, *Head Chop* aims to produce a narrativised mode of engagement that is both attentive to the narrative dimensions present within the research sources providing the basis for the Acéphale story, and the contextual changes produced when the story is utilised as a critical device with an insistence on narrative fidelity. This strategy proposes to develop a common armature for critical engagement. In doing so the figure of Acéphale is

outlined through a research-driven narrative construction, which is subsequently developed into a critical framework through its repeat application.

In developing a figure of Acéphale for use as a critical, discursive tool *Head Chop* also aims to develop a contemporary re-animation of the Acéphale story and foreground its continued relevance as a provocation to thought. In drawing attention to the critical operation of a figure, *Head Chop* explores the potentials of interdisciplinary practice and its critical dimensions. The re-animation of esoteric material is intended to foreground the use of a strange object and its possible function as an interloper in contemporary political discourse. As an interference, the historical re-animation of Acéphale aims to draw out correspondences across historical positions. Offering a tool for critical intervention and comparison, the figure of Acéphale is thus intended to be gauged for its success through its function as a critical device. Through taking on the capacity of a comparative analysis of critical thought that takes a stake in the Acéphale narrative to drive its own agenda, the figure of Acéphale is intended to act as a compound form that can transpose analytic dimensions of thought into other registers and other historical and political contexts. The figure is thus developed as an obscure counterpoint to contemporary political demands, drawing upon the surreal and esoteric dimensions of the initial Acéphale gesture.

Acéphale, through development as a narrative-driven figure, takes on a mythic dimension. The telling and re-telling of the story of Acéphale develops this structure through repetition<sup>33</sup>. When conjoined to the ambiguity of the event, proliferating through testimony and partial or oblique accounts, such a structure is heightened. Acéphale as figure thus foregrounds a dimension of myth which is countermanded by

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<sup>33</sup> See the function of repetition in myth in 'Myth Interrupted' in Nancy, J.-L. (1991) pp.43-70. This work builds on Bataille's text 'The Absence of Myth' in Bataille, G. (1994) p.48.



the work of Bataille and Nancy on myth<sup>34</sup>. *Head Chop* aims to offer a dimension of reading the figure of Acéphale that contests the absorption of the figure into a simple, regimented myth structure by opening the figure of Acéphale itself to the procedure of unworking. *Head Chop* aims to do this through the persistent recomposition of Acéphale, and the post-mortem arising which, drawn from a specific logic of Blanchot, renders death an incertitude. Such a reading frees Acéphale from the problematic of a death put to work by lodging Acéphale into the indecision of unworking. *Head Chop* thus seeks to reconcile the problematics of an arisen Acéphale with Nancy and Bataille's reading of myth. Through developing a figure driven by aleatory gesture, *Head Chop* further seeks to provide a re-incarnated counterpoint to the still-present persistence of myth as a contemporary political factor.

I propose the newly-developed figure of arisen Acéphale as a contribution of the research, a figure of necessity developed through an experimental writing practice in order to fully elucidate the dimensions in which the figure is constituted and operates. *Head Chop* aims through this development to offer a proxy for the critical discursive engagements that play out between the respective addresses of community with which the figure intersects, and in so doing it is intended that the figure is developed as a conductor for a critical analysis.

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<sup>34</sup> This work foregrounds the absence of myth as a self-dissimulative movement of myth, suggesting that the proper terminology for a diagnosis of the contemporary understanding of myth is 'the myth of the absence of myth' in which myth gains a translucence that renders its operation pernicious. Nancy's resolution (through reading Bataille) is to expose this myth of the absence of myth through a gesture of interruption. Such a gesture cannot absent myth, because this very gesture is already played out by myth itself as dissimulation. Interruption for Nancy is the only mode that is able to expose the workings of myth, thus rendering contemporary myth opaque. The exposure of myth's operation is important in Nancy for foregrounding the dimensions of mythic thought that are mobilised in fascism, particularly for Nancy in Nazism. This is most clearly delineated in Nancy's co-authored text with Lacoue-Labarthe 'The Nazi Myth', see Lacoue-Labarthe, P. & Nancy, J.-L. (1990).

## Form

*Head Chop* is the outcome of an experimental, interdisciplinary writing practice. It sets forth a critical interrogation of the thought of community in Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot as a manuscript intended to be encountered in a book form. *Head Chop* operates within the parameters of a book-length work of writing that engages with the modalities of academic writing and critical analysis, but which does so by foregrounding the expansive registers of criticality that run through each of the four engagements with community. *Head Chop* is intended to be encountered within the frameworks of the critical analysis of the concept of community developed in the works of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot, whilst at the same time foregrounding the possibilities of an expanded mode of critical address. *Head Chop* does this through the use of fictioning, a methodological and critical mode that has a germinal space in the field of contemporary art practice. *Head Chop* draws upon methodological resources within the dimensions of practice-led research to support the development of expanded registers of critical analysis. In doing so *Head Chop* aims to bridge disciplinary divisions by drawing upon supporting resources that are both of philosophy and of contemporary art practice.

In taking up the form of the book, *Head Chop* is intended to be encountered as an exemplar of an experimental, research-driven writing practice. This practice deploys novel methodological approaches to drive critical reflection and develop new channels of enquiry through sustained re-readings of source material. *Head Chop* sets forth a contemporary re-animation of a founding story of community, intending in doing so to displace critical focus onto the distinctly addressed but common register of Acéphale that is woven through the works of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot. *Head Chop* develops the implications of testing the re-imagined Acéphale story against the

research sources that deploy various modes of the story as a scene through which to engage community. *Head Chop* thus stages an archival re-animation of research sources to produce a new entry point to the mixed exchanges between Nancy and Blanchot and their mutual deployment of Bataille's work as a structure for engaging with community. This process utilises the methodology of fictioning to excavate material encountered within the Acéphale journals. The material is subsequently redeployed in order to build a narrative armature, which allows novel interrogations of community in Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot. The structure of the book allows *Head Chop* to develop within a series of parameters that suit the narrativised analysis deployed within the work.

The writing develops a sustained encounter with the works of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot by maintaining a close proximity to their works in the writing process. This proximity is developed through the use of knotted registers that move through the works. I make extended use of allusive modes and develop repeat figures, which are intended to allow extensive crossing-over of reference material and conceptual dimensions of individual works. Such an opacity or accretion of material is operative within fictioning as an integral part of the process of confounding the world-as-it-is.

*Head Chop* charts the reverberations of the re-imagined story of Acéphale in the works of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot. It is intended to be read as an experiment in sustaining a fictioning of the Acéphale story and the implications of this for the thought of community. Such an approach is grounded in the context of the specific strand of thinking community that can be traced in the works of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot, it is my intention to develop an articulation of this engagement that can foster further development.

*Head Chop* is also developed as a work of comparative analysis, setting out to interrogate each of the four engagements with community. *Head Chop* does so in order to develop a sustained analysis of the discursive connections of each reading of community. At the heart of *Head Chop* is thus a critical dialogue that aims to construct a close reading of each of the four components of analysis. Commonalities, distinctions, problematics and conflicts of heritage are all traversed through the use of fictioning as methodology<sup>35</sup>. A primary component of this structure of reading, critique and analysis is the use of figure and the consistent application of the re-imagined Acéphale narrative as a critical armature. The repeat pattern of figures allows the analysis to develop with specific focuses on inflections of the character and narrative structure of Acéphale found in the re-imagined story. Figures thus provide testing grounds for comparison, as a result developing as compound forms that engender the foregrounding of commonalities and clashes between research sources through their persistent re-use. Thus for example the twin figures of the flaming heart and the sacrificial blade permit the development of multiple critical gestures when deployed as models for reading specific works, and resultantly allow the deployment of these resonances of concepts across bodies of work. The flaming heart and the sacrificial blade operate in Bataille as emblems of the sacred and profane, heterogeneity and homogeneity, as well as metonymic structures of the sacrificial story itself. In Nancy the heart and the blade invoke the structure of the stranger/intruder and the strike of impartation<sup>36</sup>, both of which develop conceptual threads of subjectivity and ontology in Nancy's work. In Blanchot the heart and the blade become emblematic of a difficult clash between passion and law, which extends

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<sup>35</sup> For example, the commonality of unworking is played out across Blanchot and Nancy's works. The problematics of parody are developed between the work of Bataille, the proposed sacrifice and the critical engagements with this scene in Blanchot and Nancy.

<sup>36</sup> See Nancy, J-L (2002a) & Nancy, J-L (1993a) pp.9-35.

to a relationship between ethical dissymmetry and a law of obligation. In each case *Head Chop* uses figures to develop key strands of analysis and to transpose this into a composite mode that explores the discursive interplay of each of the four nodes.

As an interdisciplinary work *Head Chop* sets out an extended engagement with multiple registers, developing a compound form that adopts critical dimensions of works interrogated and deploys these within the renewed context of the Acéphale story. This compound form extends to the register of writing, which picks up and mobilises components of the research sources to develop the expanded critical registers of the research. For example, clamorous testimony is used as a critical mode of engaging with the aftermath of Acéphale arising, a register drawn from Bataille's work on inner experience<sup>37</sup>. Testimony and recall are developed as modes from Blanchot's work as further critical modes for interrogating the concept of ecstasy in Bataille's work through the work of Blanchot<sup>38</sup>.

In accommodating the multiple voices of research sources *Head Chop* proposes to be encountered as a challenge to disciplinary registers, at once relying on multiple registers to generate the critical structure of the work, and drawing upon these split registers to develop an interdisciplinary approach to the exchanges on community between Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot. *Head Chop* engages with multiple voices as forms of disruption that interfere with specific disciplinary registers in order to open out a broader spectrum of possible engagements.

I argue that particular strategies of evading narrow critical registers are evident in the works of Bataille, Blanchot and Nancy. In Bataille the sacred is staged as a

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<sup>37</sup> See Bataille, G. (1988).

<sup>38</sup> See Blanchot, M. & Derrida, J. (2000). In particular Blanchot's critical engagement with the concept of ecstasy as incompatible with a concept of self founded in experience creates complexities for Bataille's desire to report on inner experience, a problem Bataille himself notes through the description of the tyranny of project.

disruptive form that challenges the profane, it is such a register that is initially invoked in the sacrificial gesture intended to beget Acéphale. In Blanchot literature plays out a continuous textual disruption through its mode of unworking, whilst in Nancy similar roles can be given to the arts in general or the operation of the concept of the singular plural in relation to ontology. These approaches are drawn together through the structure of the re-imagined Acéphale story, in doing so *Head Chop* aims to develop a compound register that mobilises a broad range of critical logics to support the necessity of addressing the research sources in an interdisciplinary mode.

*Head Chop* is thus intended to be encountered in an interdisciplinary realm, working across the fields of art practice and continental philosophy. It aims to mutually engage with these two fields in order to develop new channels of enquiry through establishing transversal relations between the two<sup>39</sup>. The collation of these expanded registers of address also find accommodation in the form of the book as a structure for maintaining a close proximity of registers.

*Head Chop* also proposes to be encountered as a secondary resonance of the thought experiment of a human sacrifice deployed by Bataille. It is thus an archival recuperation and re-animation of a specific gesture for a new set of social, economic and historical circumstances. Bataille's experiment was developed in the context of a foreboding fascism<sup>40</sup>. The re-animation seeks in the present time to foreground the resonances of this proposition that have retained pressing exigencies for engagement.

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<sup>39</sup> The concept of transversality, deployed in Deleuze and Guattari's *What is Philosophy?* is given its most fulsome exposition in Guattari, F. (2015). Transversality denotes a lateral structure, used by Guattari as a counter to the common framework of transference in psychoanalysis. In transversality the power relations implied in transference are re-structured to act as mutual, lateral exchanges across a group rather than the hierarchical, individualised dimension of transference.

<sup>40</sup> The Acéphale journals develop an attempt to wrest Nietzsche from fascistic readings. Bataille's work itself struggles with the tensions between the destructive imperative of fascism and the liberating dimensions of destruction allied to the heterogeneous. Bataille offers a diagnostic reading of the problematic of fascism as rooted in a form of political economy keyed to the homogeneous-profane structure of capitalist organisation in *The Accursed Share*, in particular see Bataille, G. (2007a) & (2007b).

Although esoteric in form, *Head Chop* seeks to gesture towards the latencies of Bataille's sacrificial project that remain still pertinent.

*Head Chop* stages itself in these encounters as a sustained piece of academic research that is developed within the parameters of the methodology of fictioning and the re-imagined Acéphale story. The research sources are addressed through the re-imagined narrative as sources generative of both conceptual and affective dimensions that have critical import. This critical import finds its legitimation in the expanded critical registers deployed by Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot. Through being attentive to these resonances and their traversals of both the Acéphale story and the broader context of the research sources, the research methodology deployed intends to foreground the generative dimensions of interdisciplinary practice and propose the suitability of such a mode for developing research into the works of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot.

### Context

*Head Chop* spans two broad contexts: 1) the practice-led context of art and interdisciplinary writing practice; 2) the philosophical engagements with the question of community in Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot.

1) *Head Chop* engages in the context of practice-led research through the development and deployment of the methodology of fictioning. This methodology finds a germinal position in the field of art practice as a mode generative of possible worlds as testing grounds. *Head Chop* draws upon the supportive dimensions of art practice as a field in which fictioning as methodology has liberty to do critical work. *Head Chop* engages with this context of a diversification of criticality to apply a practice-led methodological

approach to a philosophical problematic. Critical expansion in *Head Chop* moves across disciplinary boundaries in order to develop a register that can interrogate the multiple and complex modes of the research sources. *Head Chop* thus makes a claim for the generative capacity of expanded critical registers and interdisciplinary practice. In this particular case the claim is made for the appositeness of this expanded register to the question of community and its positioning within the thought of Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot. In developing an analysis of community in an interdisciplinary context, informed by methodological approaches derived from engagement with the field of art practice, *Head Chop* foregrounds the suitability of interdisciplinary practice for an engagement with the thought of community. This claim is staked on the complex developmental schema that provides the context for community in Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot. The multi-valent development of community as a concept draws upon a range of critical registers, whilst at the same time finding cognate conceptual developments in the research sources spanning a range of conceptual themes such as art, literature, sacrifice, subjectivity, ontology, ethics, love, death, expenditure, the sacred, and politics. This breadth of reference, context and conceptual investiture situates the theoretical groundwork of community in a context of more than one discipline, and as a concept that demands an approach that is attentive to the rich heritage and complex composition of such an idea.

The use of the conceptual tool of unworking, developed within the context of literature in Blanchot's work<sup>41</sup> and utilised in the context of community by both Nancy and Blanchot, demonstrates the complex crossed-over modes of

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<sup>41</sup> See Blanchot, M. (1982a).



address developed in the interrogation of community as concept. Furthermore, the development of Nancy's concept of the singular plural in the context of an analysis of community also develops more widely into a concept that emerges in Nancy's engagement with art<sup>42</sup>. Whilst the use of an indeterminate event of sacrifice to provide a space for engaging with community also shifts the dimensions of this engagement into a space replete with the impropriety of mystery. Such provocations raise the question of context and the demand of thinking community in modalities that push critical registers. It is on such a claim that the approach of *Head Chop* seeks to stake out its ground.

2) The question of community in the lineage of the debate between Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot has recently been given an expanded presence by the publication of Nancy's *The Disavowed Community* (2016), a belated response to Blanchot's *The Unavowable Community*. From a distance of thirty years, Nancy re-engages with Blanchot through a meditation on community that seeks to redress Blanchot's response and develop a reading of community modulated by some of the critical postures encountered. The book is at once a re-working of the motif of community lodged between Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot, and at the same time a sustained meditation on the work of Blanchot through the narrow lens of *The Unavowable Community*. The contemporary recuperation of this specific strand of thinking community thus lends a renewed force to the discursive connections interrogated within *Head Chop*. The works navigated within *Head Chop* themselves play out important tensions within the continental tradition. Identifying clashes in the respective philosophical heritages that inform specific accounts of community, *Head*

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<sup>42</sup> See in particular Nancy, J.-L. (1996).

*Chop* links to a context of tensions between Levinasian and Heideggerean traditions that subtend the relations between Blanchot and Nancy. Levinasian themes of the other, love and the ethical relation are the most apparent in Blanchot's work on community, structuring as it does a reading in which the objections of Levinas against the holism of ontological projects find a cognate form in an engagement with community built around the intensity of the lovers' relation (characterised by Nancy as the 1+1). Nancy's reading of community alternately privileges a modified ontological reading that in a certain measure accommodates critiques drawn from Levinas: the sweeping heroic narrative of Heidegger's ontology is mitigated in Nancy's reading by a privileging of the relation of being-with (*Mitsein* in Heidegger) that pluralises the ontological framing of Heidegger's work.

*Head Chop* is also situated in a social and historical context in which the terms of community are exposed to fractious forces that seek to instrumentalise specific tenets of a communitarian thinking to support political projects that undoubtedly have little interest in the complexities of analysis mobilised by Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot. *Head Chop* works in a tradition of oblique gesture, such as the gesture made by Bataille in offering up a human sacrifice as a provocation for thinking community, or the gesture made by Bataille-Masson in illustrating the perverse after-life of Acéphale. These gestures serve as a prototype for the methodology of fictioning developed within *Head Chop*. Fictioning, as an articulation of possible worlds through the appearance of otherworldly or untimely interventions in the world-as-it-is, denotes too an initial obliqueness in material generated. It is within this structure that *Head Chop* develops a tangential and adjunct commentary, which aims to maintain the esoteric

dimensions of the research sources. In doing so *Head Chop* seeks to mobilise, through a critical narrative gesture, a discourse on community still in development and still in part unheeded.

*Head Chop* thus does not seek to stray far from the esoteric nature of the research sources. In taking an oblique approach to developing a critical register the work aims to re-animate the Acéphale narrative as a schema for further development within the interdisciplinary field in which *Head Chop* is invested.

In developing a practice-led reading of the discourse on community in Bataille, Nancy and Blanchot, *Head Chop* draws upon the multiple writing practices of the research sources to inform its own critical approach. *Head Chop* thus wilfully makes use of allusion, oblique references, the use of repetition, common figures and affects, conceptual resonances and esoteric materials in relation to the research sources in order to develop its own critical register. Such an approach is keyed to the logic of engendering an apposite approach to research sources, as well as a belief in the generative potential of a reading with liberty to trace affective engagement, a mode following the reading method utilised by Deleuze and Guattari in *Kafka*. *Head Chop* aims to develop a critical voice that is suitable to the context in which the work itself sits. In developing an interdisciplinary, practice-led body of work, *Head Chop* situates itself in relation to an audience interested in the expanded dimensions of critical practice and the role of interdisciplinarity in extending engagements with criticality as well as its generative potential for new modes of enquiry. It is thus that *Head Chop* engages in registers appropriate to both the field of contemporary art practice and the field of continental philosophy. Such a context provides a basis for the development of a critical voice that has the liberty to determine an adjunct space from the disciplinary crossing that *Head Chop* seeks to engage in.

## Structure

*Head Chop* begins with the chapter *Spit*, which develops a reading of Deleuze and Guattari's *What is Philosophy?* through the twin props of an indicator flash and spit. The aim is to establish a precedent for the type of work that the thesis intends to do by elaborating a model in which these two constructs and their affective and conceptual dimensions begin to cross.

*Obelisk* opens the scene of the predominant conceptual thread of the thesis. It provides an anchor to link each phase of the analysis of the Acéphale story's implications when read back into each of the four main sources. The obelisk itself is a compound structure established from a number of works by Bataille, it stands too as a perverse monument, anchoring a resolutely non-monumental logic of Bataillean thought to a structure that imposes itself against Bataille.

*Jut* establishes a figure for the counter-intuitive sticking through. Working through the use of 'himself' as a rhetorical figure in Blanchot's work, *Jut* interrogates the peculiar structure of death outlined by Blanchot.

*Sacrifice* is the first telling of the story of Acéphale. An initial fictioning that sets up a world of arisen Acéphale, *Sacrifice* states the initial theme upon which the subsequent sections are patterned.

The story is extended into three following chapters. "*Behold Acéphale!*" which addresses the naming of Acéphale and the experience of the ritual's participants through a Bataillean lens. *Up, up, up*, which traces the initial story of Acéphale's celestial ascent and subsequent roaming through mythic worlds. *Fable*, which recomposes the whole story into a short, iterative form.

*Bataille* is the first chapter of a four part repeat structure (with minor variations) that traces the re-imagined story of Acéphale. The other three parts are *Nancy*, *Blanchot*, and *Return*. Each chapter is patterned on a four stage retelling of the Acéphale story: the sacrifice, the arising, the celestial ascent, the mythic roam. The final three parts, *Nancy*, *Blanchot*, *Return*, are all told through the device of Obelisk, which establishes a hypnotic, reverential hold over an approaching figure before plunging them into a vision of the sacrificial scene.

Interspersed throughout the predominant analytic thread of the four linked chapters are a series of three supportive chapters, which establish conceptual groundwork for the analysis of the encounter between the Acéphale story and the source material. These sections are developed as adjuncts to the underlying analysis of community, they pick up and mobilise other problematics. They appear as follows:

- 1) *Tremors* develops a reading of the conceptual reworking of Heidegger's ontology towards Mitsein by Nancy. To do this it traces the critique of the subject and the concept of the individual, through a reading of the role of decision in Heidegger's philosophy, to the rationale for establishing Mitsein's precedence over Dasein.
- 2) *Myth* explores Nancy's engagements with the concept of myth and its relation to the political exigencies of thinking a community that is non-immanent and unworked. It conjoins Nancy's thought on myth to Bataille's work, and traces a connection between the problematics of myth and the problematics of Heidegger's thought in relation to Nazism.
- 3) *Face* establishes relations between Blanchot's thought and Levinas's metaphysical project. Drawing thematic foci from Blanchot's *Unavowable Community* as a source, *Face* develops an analysis of these themes in relation

to the figure of Acéphale. It aims to articulate two fundamental points: 1) the problems of a Levinasian engagement with the figure of Acéphale because the face is missing; 2) the fundamental tension between Blanchot's and Nancy's readings of community based on their respective philosophical heritages: a metaphysics rejecting totalising ontology, and an ontology rejecting the history of metaphysics.



# Masson's Acéphale

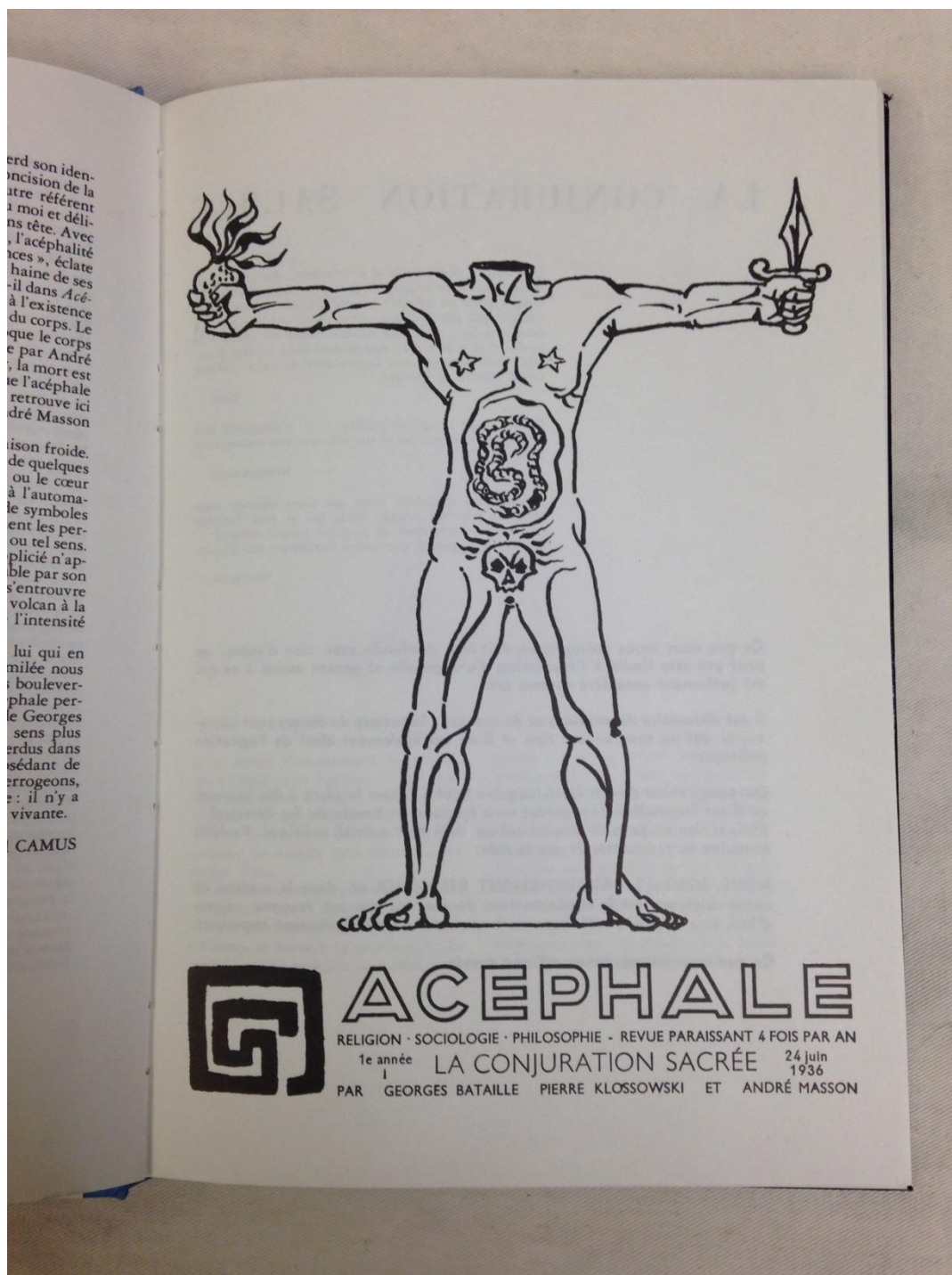
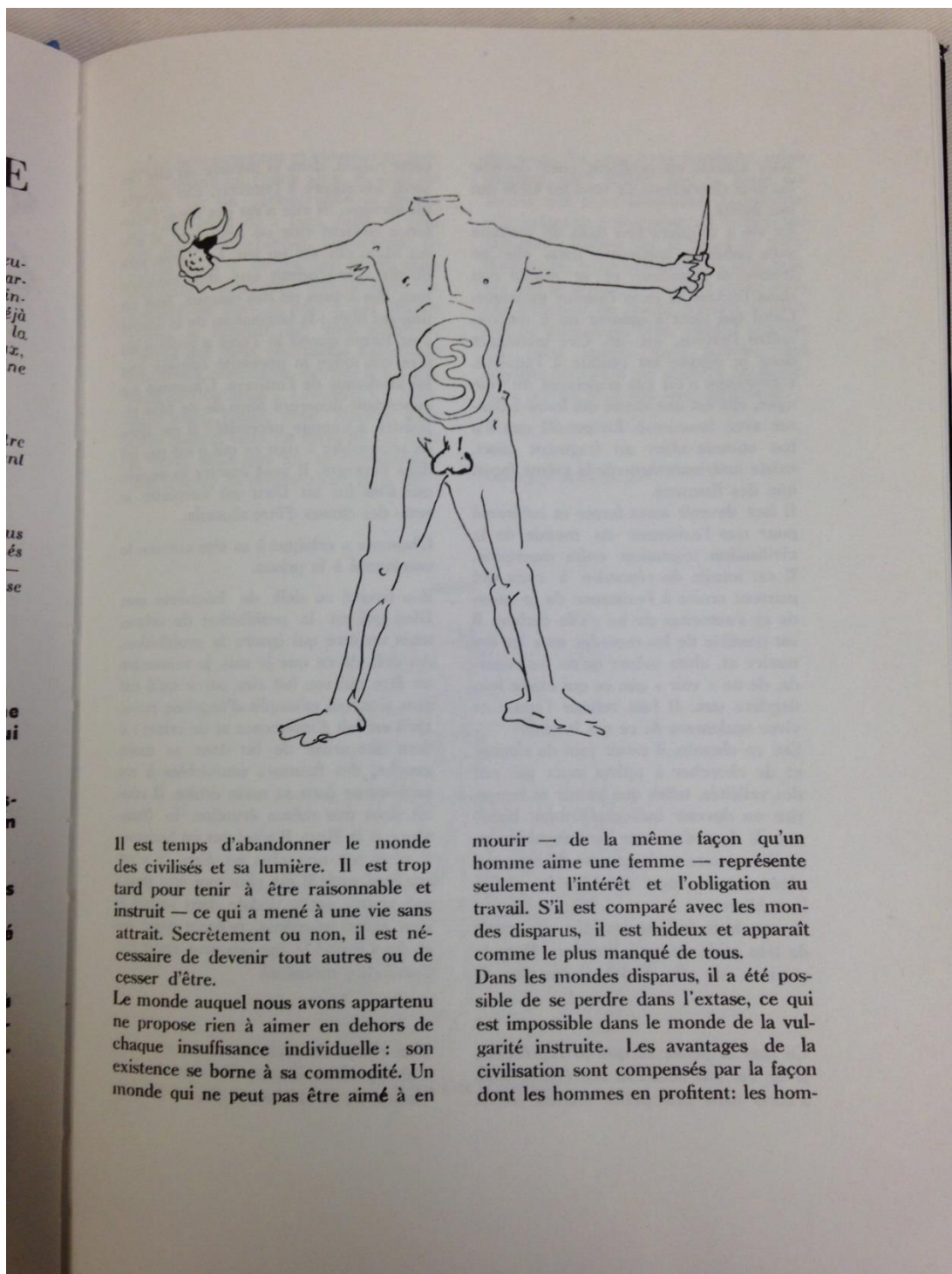


Figure 1: André Masson, Cover Illustration for *Acéphale* 1, 1936





Il est temps d'abandonner le monde des civilisés et sa lumière. Il est trop tard pour tenir à être raisonnable et instruit — ce qui a mené à une vie sans attrait. Secrètement ou non, il est nécessaire de devenir tout autres ou de cesser d'être.

Le monde auquel nous avons appartenu ne propose rien à aimer en dehors de chaque insuffisance individuelle : son existence se borne à sa commodité. Un monde qui ne peut pas être aimé à en

mourir — de la même façon qu'un homme aime une femme — représente seulement l'intérêt et l'obligation au travail. S'il est comparé avec les mondes disparus, il est hideux et apparaît comme le plus manqué de tous.

Dans les mondes disparus, il a été possible de se perdre dans l'extase, ce qui est impossible dans le monde de la vulgarité instruite. Les avantages de la civilisation sont compensés par la façon dont les hommes en profitent : les hom-

Figure 2: Andre Masson, Illustration for *Acéphale* 1, 1936

où elle de-  
lle accepte  
ibre, l'exis-  
et, si elle  
Terre, tant  
cataclys-  
ix, était un  
e la liberté  
produit un  
omme une  
omme est  
ne plus ré-  
il est libre  
est pas lui  
la pensée  
mpêche le  
e.

comme le

même non  
du crime,  
rohibition.  
rencontre  
e qu'il est  
isse parce  
crime : il  
sa main  
bles à un  
te. Il réu-  
la Nais-  
n homme.  
a. Il n'est  
que moi :  
lequel il  
avec lui  
étant lui,

nien vient  
mbre est  
é Masson

s'agite heureusement et chante : au moment même où j'écris ainsi, il vient de mettre sur un phonographe le disque de l'ouverture de « Don Juan » : plus que toute autre chose, l'ouverture de « Don Juan » lie ce qui m'est échu d'existence à un défi qui m'ouvre au ravissement hors de soi. A cet instant même, je regarde cet être acéphale, l'intrus que deux obsessions également emportées composent, devenir le « Tombeau de Don Juan ». Lorsqu'il y a quelques jours, j'étais avec Masson dans cette cuisine, assis, un verre de vin dans la main, alors que lui, se représentant tout à coup sa propre mort et la mort

des siens, les yeux fixes, souffrant, criait presque qu'il fallait que la mort devienne une mort affectueuse et passionnée, criant sa haine pour un monde qui fait peser jusque sur la mort sa patte d'employé, je ne pouvais déjà plus douter que le sort et le tumulte infini de la vie humaine ne soient ouverts à ceux qui ne pouvaient plus exister comme des yeux crevés mais comme des voyants emportés par un rêve bouleversant qui ne peut pas leur appartenir.

Tossa, 29 avril 1936.

Georges BATAILLE.



*Le glaive, c'est la passerelle*

Figure 3: Andre Masson, 'Le glaive, c'est la passerelle,' Illustration for Acéphale 1, 1936

LA TERRE  
 FEU INCANDESCENT  
 OUS LES PIEDS  
 NCE DE LA TERRE  
 JIRA LES PATRIES  
 EVIENDRA FEU  
 ET FER  
 A LA PRISON

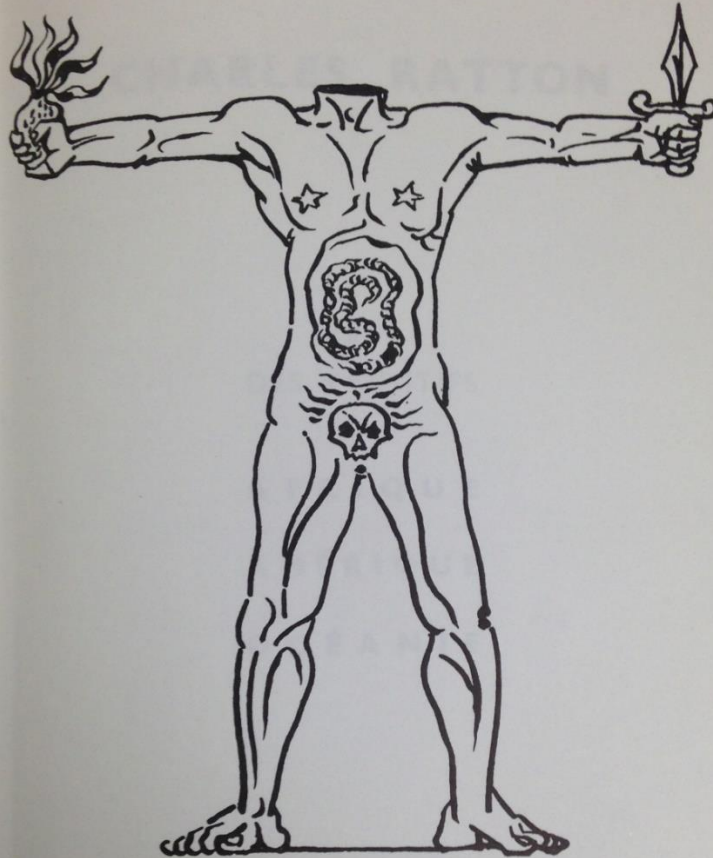
ataille

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 HE

ages):  
 s: 151  
 er 37)

NS G. L. M.

e révèle enfin l'objet...  
 Dieu ni comme néant...  
 libérer autrement que  
 l'existence déchirée.



# ACÉPHALE

RELIGION SOCIOLOGIE PHILOSOPHIE REVUE PARAISSANT 4 FOIS PAR AN

NUMÉRO 21  
 DOUBLE NIETZSCHE et les FASCISTES JANVIER  
 6 frs UNE RÉPARATION 1937  
 PAR G. BATAILLE · P. KLOSSOWSKI · A. MASSON · J. ROLLIN · J. WAHL

Figure 4: Andre Masson, Cover Illustration for Acéphale 2, 1937



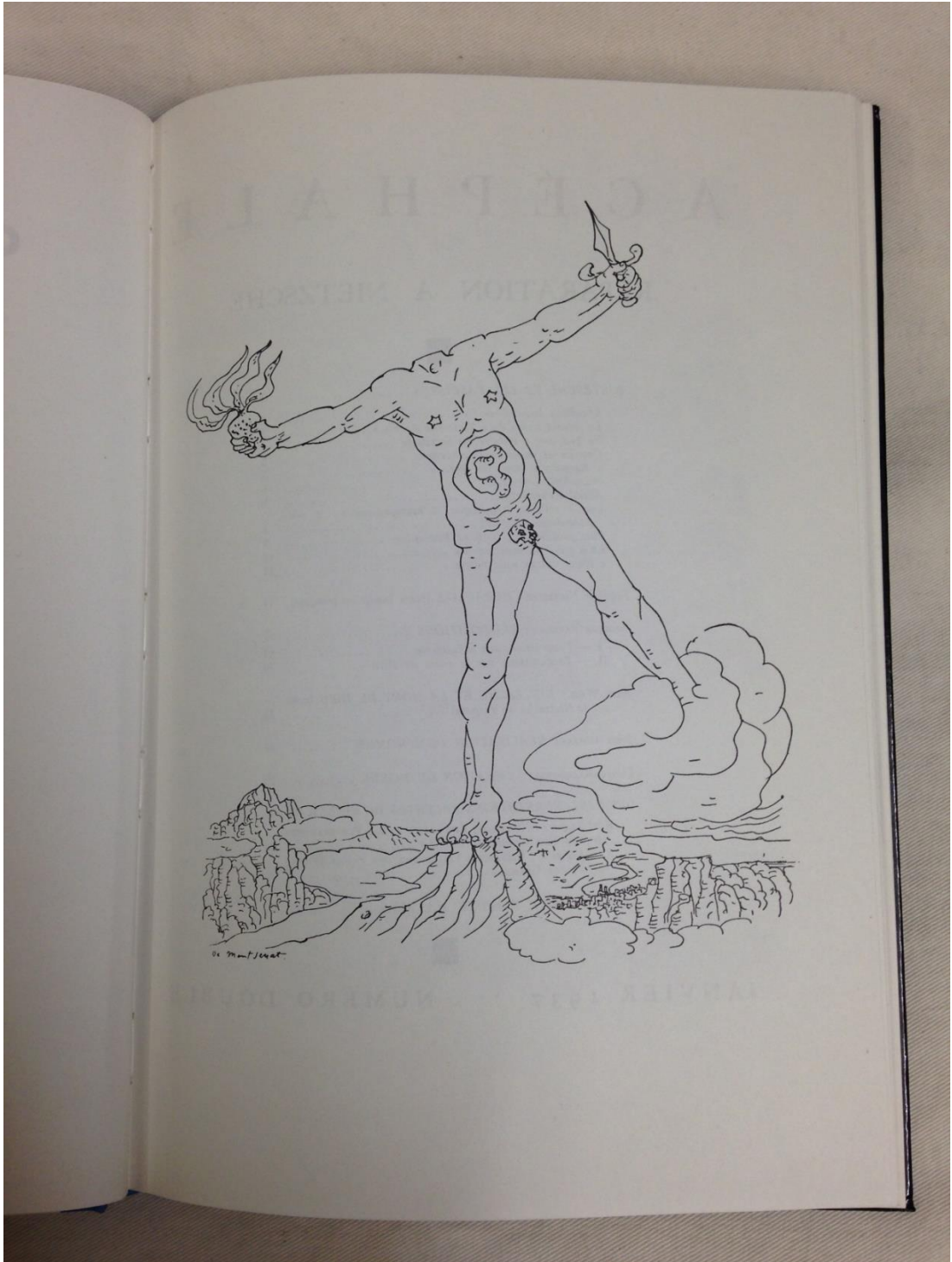


Figure 5: Andre Masson, *Illustration for Acéphale 2*, 1937

E



Les choses elles-mêmes à la solidité et à la fixité desquelles croit la tête étroite de l'homme ou de l'animal n'ont aucune existence propre. Ce sont les éclats et les éclairs des épées brandies, le scintillement de la victoire dans le combat des qualités contraires... La consommation totale dans le feu est satié... La satiété engendre le crime (l'hybris)... Toute l'histoire du monde serait-elle le châtiement de l'hybris? Le multiple, le résultat d'un crime?... Le feu... joue..., se transformant en eau et en terre..., il construit comme un enfant des châteaux de sable..., il les édifie, les détruit et... recommence le jeu à son début. Un instant de satiété. Ensuite, le besoin le saisit de nouveau... Ce n'est pas l'instinct du crime, c'est le goût du jeu, toujours à nouveau éveillé, qui appelle à la vie de nouveaux mondes...

NIETZSCHE, LA PHILOSOPHIE A L'ÉPOQUE TRAGIQUE DE LA GRÈCE (PASSIM).

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Figure 6: Andre Masson, Illustration for Acéphale 2, 1937



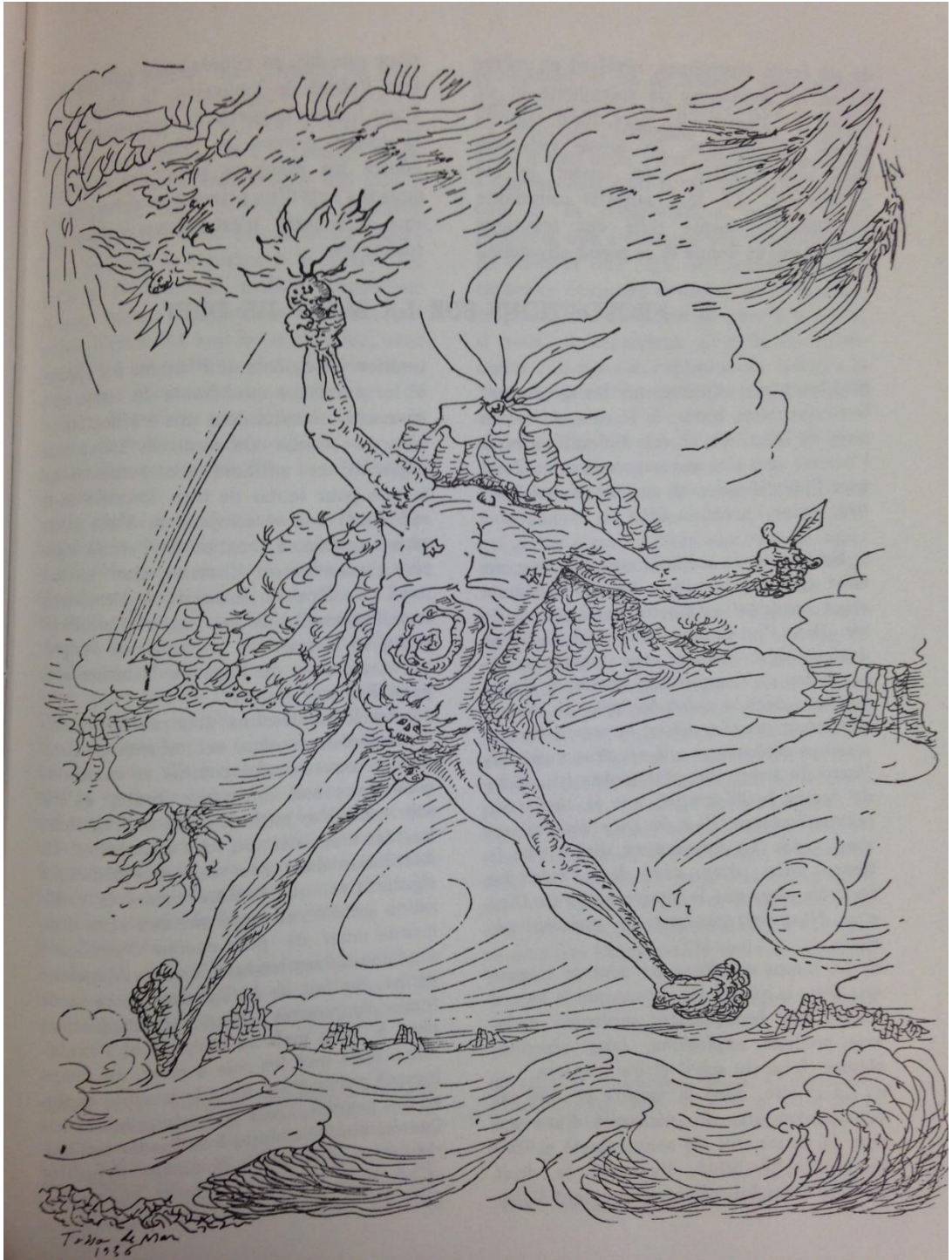


Figure 7: Andre Masson, Illustration for *Acéphale* 2, 1937

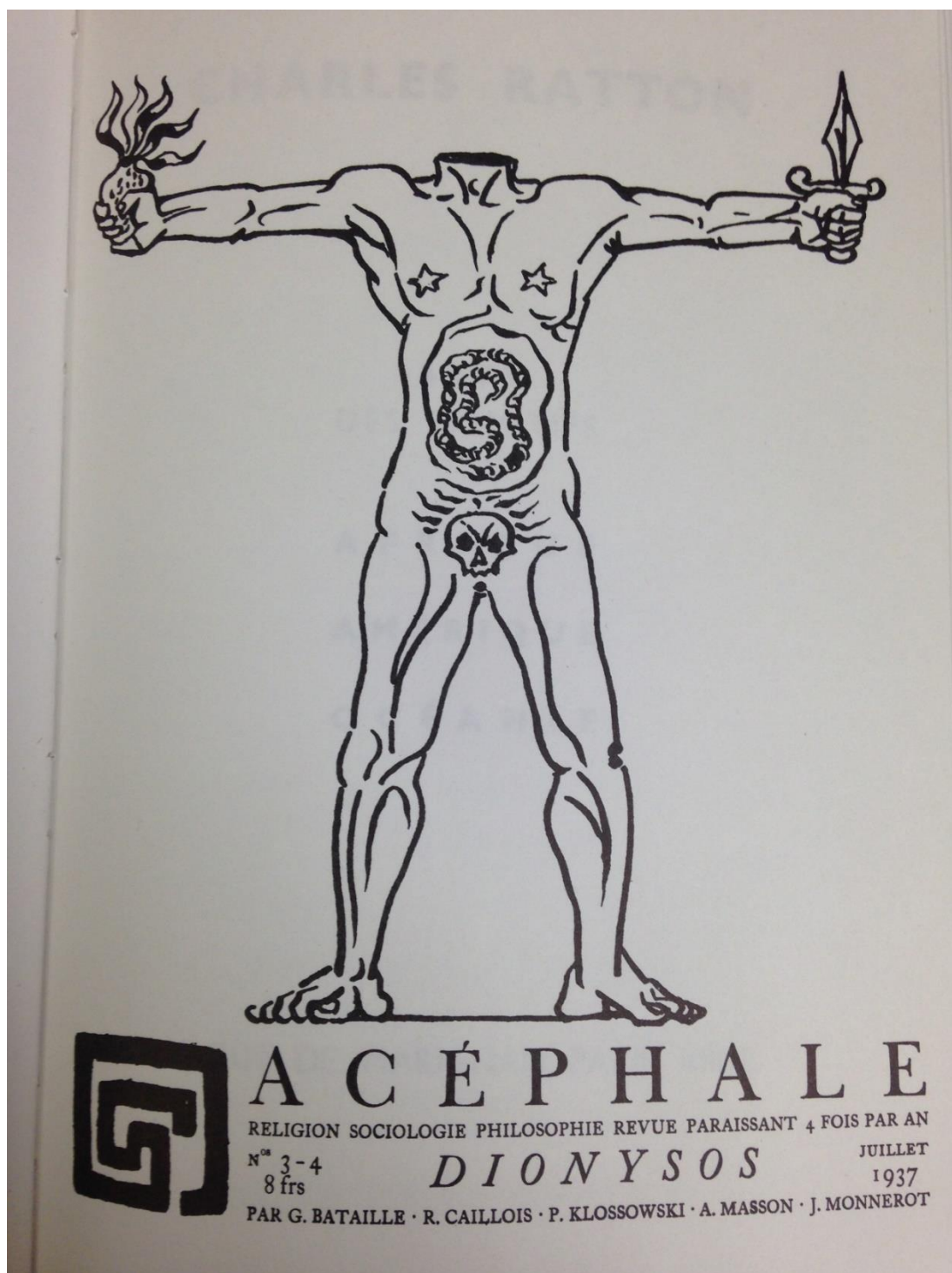


Figure 8: Andre Masson, Cover Illustration for *Acéphale* 3/4, 1937



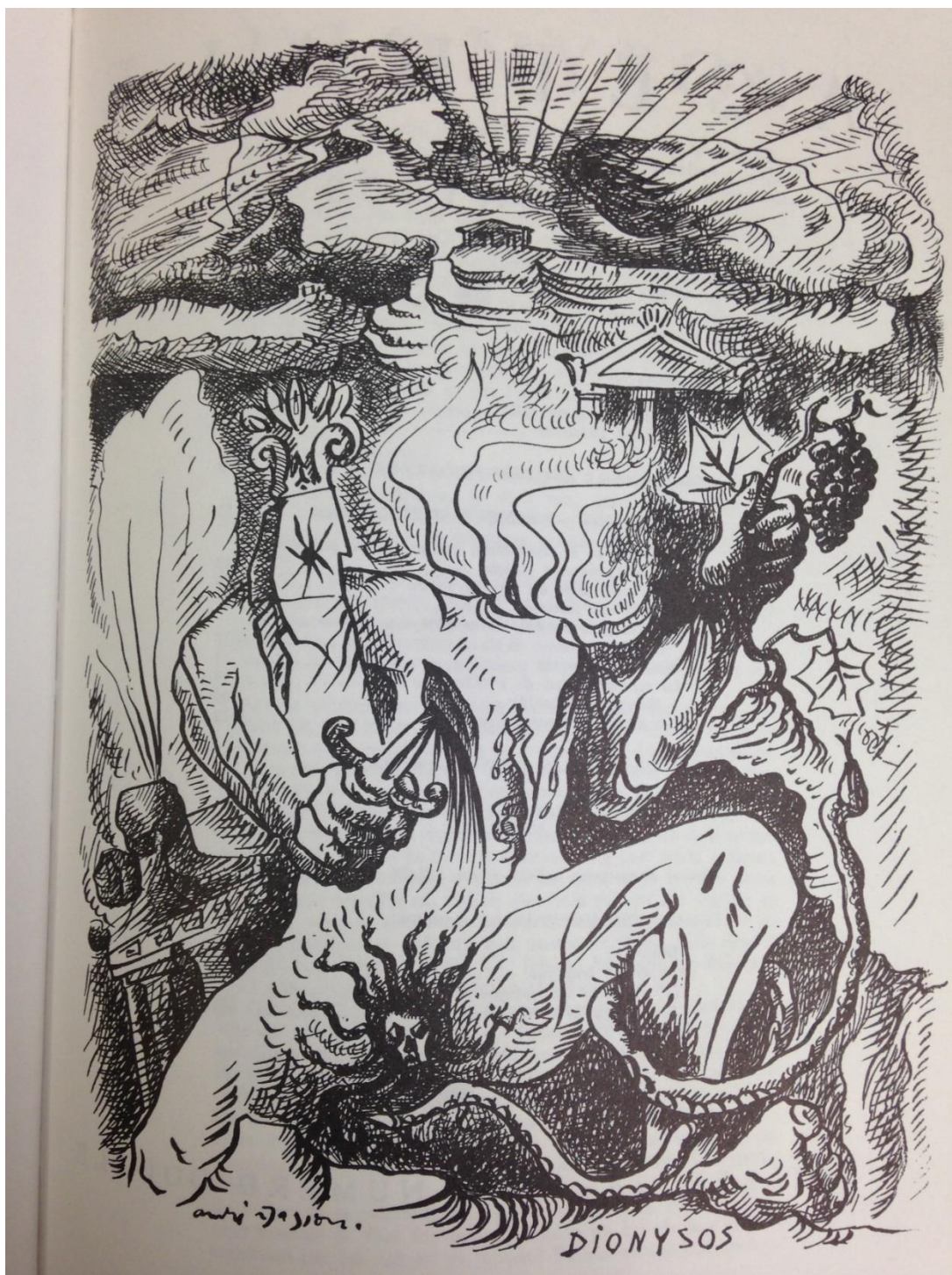


Figure 9: Andre Masson, 'Dionysos,' Illustration for *Acéphale* 3/4, 1937



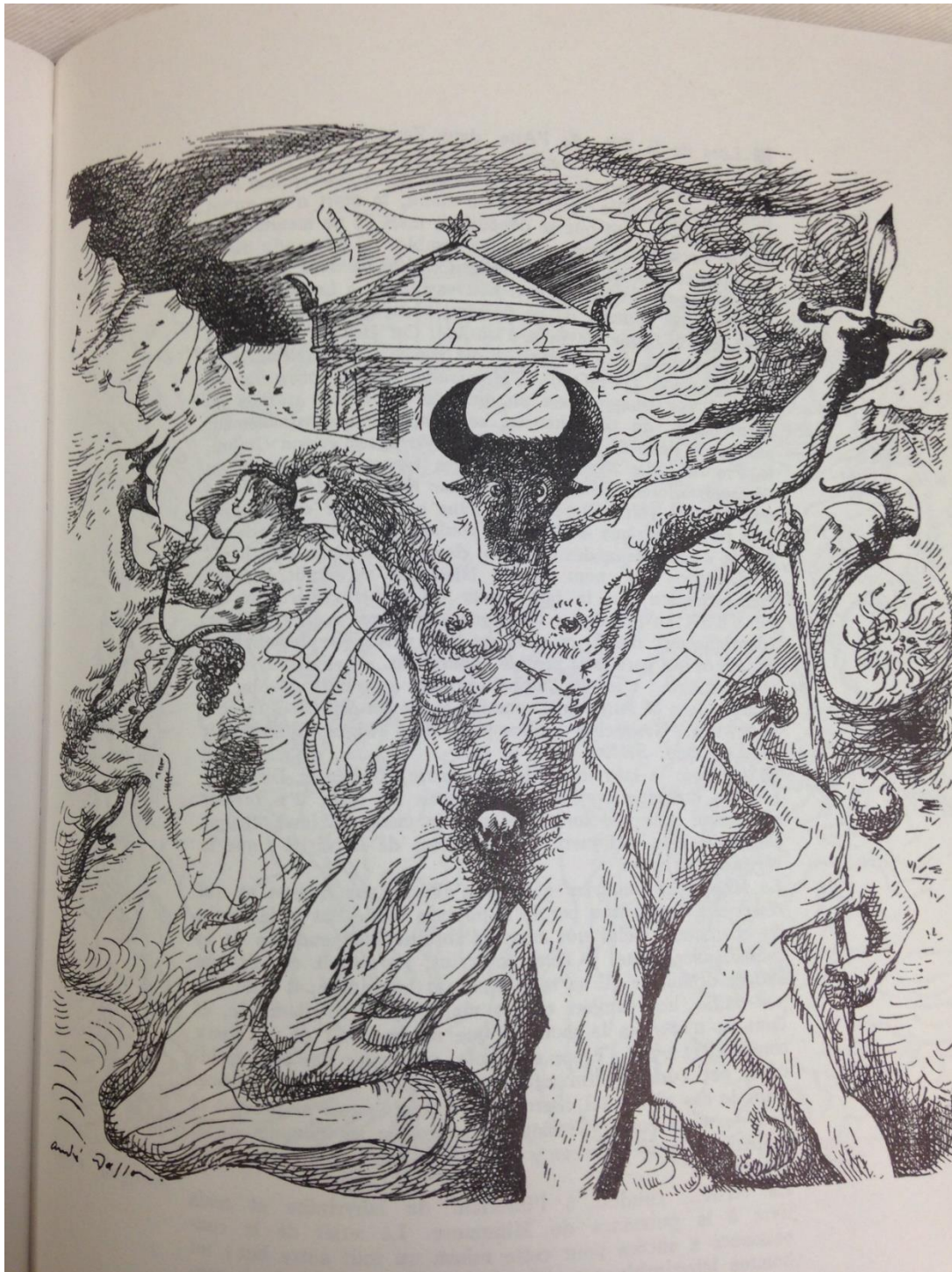


Figure 10: Andre Masson, Illustration for *Acéphale* 3/4, 1937



Figure 11: Andre Masson, Illustration for *Acéphale* 3/4, 1937



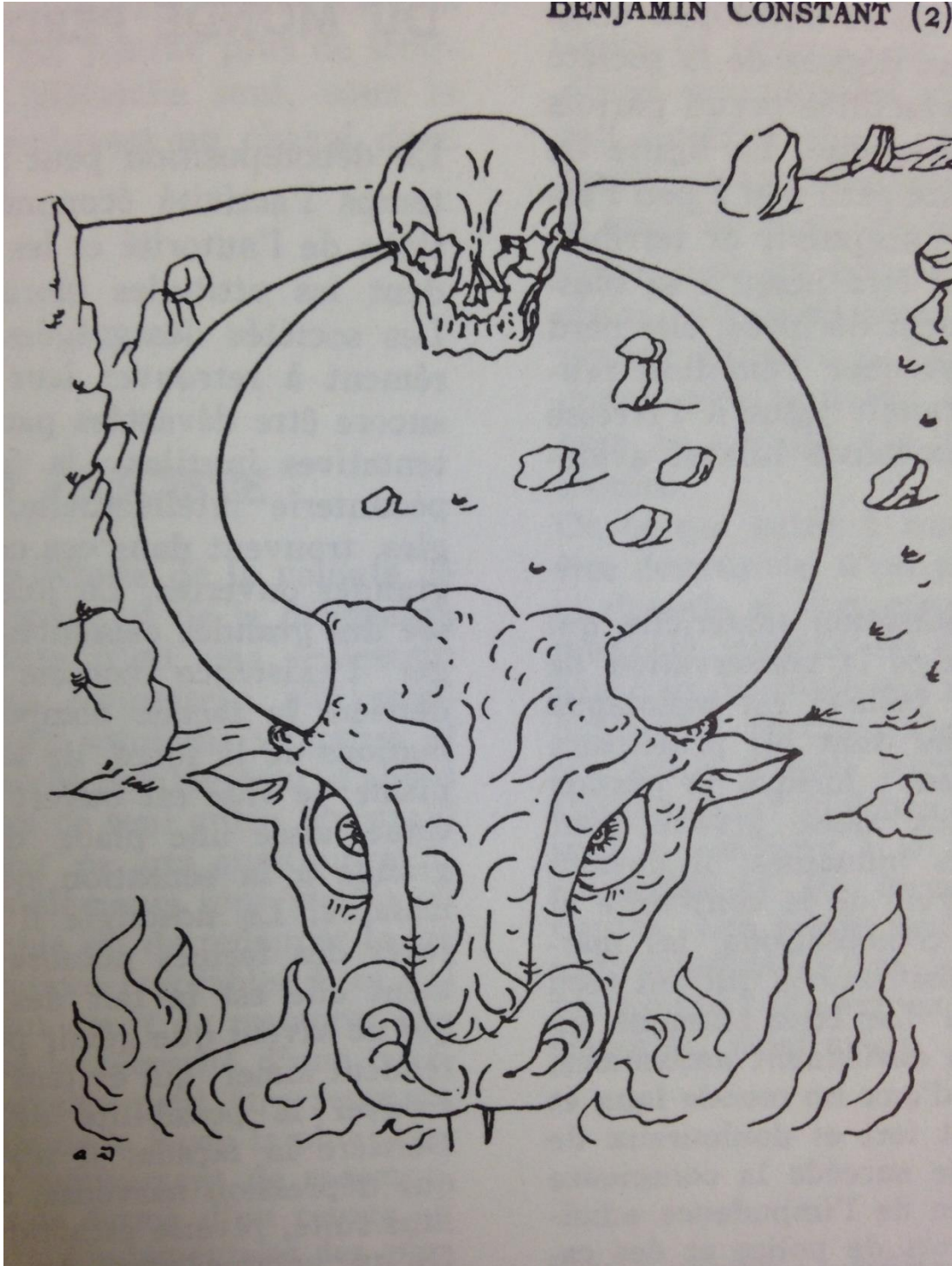


Figure 12: Andre Masson, Illustration for *Acéphale* 3/4, 1937

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HEAD CHOP



# Spit

A car rolls down the street, slows gradually, whilst from the left-hand door stanchion an indicator arm snaps out. Flicking up to a horizontal position from within metallic encasement of the car body, the arm stops abruptly.

Orange flicker, then orange flicker.

Repeat cascade with mechanical regularity.

All stop.

Flash held. Orange incandescence saturating.

Vision pans out. The micro is pulled into the macro as a slow zoom out from indicator arm to world environment begins.

Close focus indicator arm. Metallic detail. Corroded edge. Weathered casing. Attention centred, whilst slow distancing from close-up scrutiny draws arm into context of bulk-metal embodiment, frame expands, lumbering vehicle heavy on cobblestone road diminishes in scale as focus widens to accommodate loose affiliation of building facades, frame expands, single figure of bystander caught mid-step, leg contorted in ungraceful gait. Final pause.

Three things held in freeze-frame: indicator, environment, cusp of action. The indicator sticks out, its light and action suspended. Zoom out reveals a general scene with indicator, driver, car, street. Between indicator and future world is a paused explosion of action. From the flash to the anticipated eventual turn, a hectic composition of actions wait to be detonated from singular illumination.

Through zoom out, the indicator flash composes particular actions into an ever-growing singular figure. Tight focus shows close-up orange resonance, action of illumination, mechanical click, left turn. As zoom out continues flash composes



broader passages: illumination, bystander response; then illumination, car braking, left turn, reflection on windowpane of building, captivated attention of another bystander. This figure unfolds and expands as the scene enlarges, growing into a complex scaffold. From the general environment orange-glow develops an alternate path of tensions running throughout the slow zoom-out framing. Breaking the central focus latched onto the origin of the distributed affects, the luminescent map of orange highlights skips across paused scene, marking alternate paths of parallel focus. An ordered, relational map of slow zoom-out sliced by a tangled illumination drawing out points of a rudimentary facia. Haptic cartography rather than ordinal-point topography. A multiplicity of environments pulled through relational point of indicator.

Frozen environment of event, drawn out and around central figure of orange-flash. Environment mapped once, twice, then more. Alternate paths constituting small-scale scenographies.

Eventually composited in broad figure of indicator flash, environments unfold through following actions in this paused world. The pause draws out synchronic models of environment, but with this they lose their precious mutability. Flash suspended, tensions and channels of extension cut short for privileged view of single moment.

Each cusp of action is retained as gesture of indicator arm. Suspension of flash, held motion of heavy vehicle, laborious turn of steering wheel, brisk glance of driver, bystander's clumsy gait. All drawn out as a relational map from single flash, whilst zoomed out environment stages general material components of refracted light: car, street, town. All held together as system of particularities pulled and twisted into a paused illumination that casts around the environment.

In pausing, held. Each cusp marked by a waiting. A tendency towards transition and the aleatory, yet in frozen scene a mapping of trajectories taken attempts an exploration of the path of each cusp.

Un-pause, cusp surpassed.

Off.

On.

Off.

On.

Cascade through and between surfaces. Illuminations clouding, superimposing, captivating and distorting. All manner of possible maps. A slowed-down, microscopic time could pull out these nuances: flash travels through window darts around room interior gleaning surface information from inside before being caught by eye of bystander who is looking at spit pulled taut across cobblestone road as it too is illuminated by orange incandescence.

The indicator flash works through a scene. Skipping through singular disparate environments, marking out paths through and between particular moments, carving out a route contingent by necessity whilst the action it stakes out is taking place. Indicator draws out paths of multiple expansion. Each reflective spark ignites explosive proliferation. A broad series of actions unfold: indicator flash, touch of the brakes, halted pedestrian, turned wheel. A counterpoint to indicator light that darts between specifics. An alternate proliferation held within the singular density of indicator flash.

Multiple overlappings pervade. From the broad consequences of actions observed to the unseen correspondences drawn out within the general environment. Minor, nuanced trajectories with unrealised force map out other worlds of concern. A

great richness of material, condensed into the sweeping time of the broad gesture.  
Within, multiplicity and minor action: other worlds for exploration.

Indicator traverses multiple scenes, tracing connections between disparate world facets, spreading in multiplicity whilst the cascade of light from the repeat on-off confounds the precedent of mechanical repetition by interruption from the continuous change of motion. Continuity of electrical click, assured measure of referential time, counts out a particular trajectory whilst the refractive projections of the indicator span across ever shifting paths. Minor changes of position reorient world for indicator-light traversal, confusing the methodical rhythm of the never-tardy click. Singular, non-iterative sets of proposed relations are marked out: window pane, polished wooden chamfer, bystander's eye becomes

Click off.

Click on.

in the next moment window pane, mirror reflection, edge of cut-glass tumbler, dispersal of luminous cascade across shadowed ceiling

Click off.

Click on.

The precise count of the on-off click distributes alternate connective networks of enormous variety. Sprawling, uncontrolled distribution spreads from the mechanical assurance of a regulated world. A strange incidence: mechanised geometric regularity of indicator click distributes the hectic, multiplicitous strands of unfinished tangents. The strangeness of the experience, ceaseless regularity with predictable future opens worlds without method or end.

The continuous, iterative measure of the electrical impulse thus distributes other world framings of a richness that escapes its own precedent of reference.

Framings of light-flicker exploration draw out odd trajectories constituting novel perspectives. A world framed through window pane shimmer, through tatty chamfer-edge gloss, or through scattered reflection in bystander's iris.

A sprawl of connections is knotted within the figure of the flash. Indicator works in a world, casting light through a prism of possibilities. Connections are drawn out and proliferate beyond enumerable capacity. An explosive cascade runs through a world, captured momentarily in its expansive, potent beauty as figure. A kind of tentative stasis that can be reanimated through exploratory immersion: as refracted light, as window pane, as interior surface or as spitting bystander. A nuanced, minor world in which occupancies of particularity open out singular perspectives, multiple viewpoints and multiple temporalities, positions of looking that traverse a scene through alien proliferations and multiplications.

Intersections and knottings of trajectories link up singular points, elaborating worlds framed through the hyper-particularity of a point of view. World of windowpane. World of chamfer. Incidence colours worlds. Overlaps, conjunctions, cancellations of particularity enforce or reduce specifics.

Nodes form strange hybrids. The lowly particularity of polished wooden chamfer, murky spit, refractive cut-glass tumbler, shadowed ceiling, or broad regularity of cobbled street, lumbering car, shop facade, terraced house. Such hybrids recompose looking through the proliferation of points of access. Explorations of a world as light beam, as static transparency, as indicator arm, as electrical signal, drawn up within a world posed through a singular figure. Imagine: impact of indicator flash on glass, traversal of transparent body by light, arc through air of spit pulling light-flash into glutinous body, surface tension of mucosal liquid. Not sympathetically, but as. Imagine world as glass pane; imagine world as spit.

Coughed up with passing car, spit follows arced trajectory through scene. Rhythmically illuminated by the diminishing glimmer of indicator light. Regulated click tracing a staccato pathway of spit that has a curious overlapped appearance of two parallel shifting forms. The liquidity of form loses its flowing consistency when repeat illumination marks out two alternate continuities.

Click on.

Orange incandescence. Translucence glistens, swallows light flash.

Click off.

Dulled spit-form, murky ambience.

Click on.

New luminescence.

Click off.

Shadowed world.

Click on.

With each click, a shifting form without grace of flow but with the interruption of an impudent change of shape. Abrupt compositional changes appear as an almost distinct series of ever-changing solids.

Following a rhythmically inflected trajectory, spit arcs through air. Resonance of guttural ejection diminishes with fall of spit. Landing, edges spread; mucosal elasticity draws surface in, strings of saliva are cast off as atmospheric mist. After a moment, settled form.

Spit lump sits atop road surface, drawn out over the gentle arc of the cobble. Surface tension holds pockets of air, tiny domes with crystalline reflections. Clustered within a perimeter that here and there gives way to wet, gritty cobblestones. A smooth

expanse, punctuated by vibrant attenuations spread haphazardly throughout mucosal body.

Coagulated tension holds across spit, drawing a consistency across an otherwise intensely varied surface. Multiple facets of distinct textures are drawn together into a composed structure. Almost formally dissonant, spit-composition retains multiple strands. From bubble to bubble a path of discrete qualities, distinctions of size, shape, texture, material. Precarious in their form, each bubble sits on the cusp of dissolution. Holding the possibility of disappearing completely into the whole maintaining its existence, or breaking the structure and releasing its pocket of air into the atmosphere.

Heterogeneity of tensions, variable constitutions and a macro-homogeneous structure all pull through the persisting embodiment of spit. Clashing of regimes: micro corruption, macro stability. Forces of tension, complexities of counteraction. Subservience, revolution. Structure breaking, retention of generality.

Tension retains bubbles. A multiplicity of elements held together in a single composite structure. Mutuality of parts. Bubbles pull surface taut, whilst surface holds elements together. A kind of symphonic structure: parts composed and twisted into life through tension of conducting. Counterpoint, harmonic interplay, consonances and raucous dissonance, augmented structures, inversions, all measure out particularities of a rich composite.

Mutuality of surface permits short-line connections between disparate points. Thus the hypothetical ability to map spit-structure in infinite ways by following surface tension lineaments between and through any number of tense pockets. Innumerable relational fields possible within composited lump.

Edges too, of spit, not always implacable. Excrescent parts join. Bits slip into and out of the tension of the spit-structure; mucosal leakage too as walls collapse and things escape. Spit always engages a world context, not as curious redundancy, but as active participant: pulling in, seeping out. An aleatory engagement, yet always possible. A composite that must accommodate the capacity to give way. Tenebrous stability slowly encroaches into world as spit dries. Through evaporation structure loses tension, becoming flaccid salival sprawl with residual solids leftover.

Spread across ground, tautness composes surface that holds variegated facets. Each pocket has singular consistency, its own materiality retained but pulled into a composed specificity of this spit. Close focus shows subsurface striations of textural forms and colours, varying viscosities with distinct tensions. Each facet retains internal divisions, responding to continual pressures deforming edges and interrupting material structure. Tension proposes a particularity of spit that at the same time holds across the infra-particularity of air bubbles and sinusoidal excess. The broad span of particularity consumes deviations whilst engendering shifts of absorption, evaporation and subsurface combats that contort mucosal distributions.

Always a particularity. Yet on the cusp of deformation, of transition. Spit tension has a wavering, hesitant quality, meaning that particularity in this instance is always an elusive and curious proposition.

Conspicuous through improperness of bearing, spit on cobblestone road resonates with rhythmic flash of indicator.

Off.

Dulling.

On.

Glow.

Off.

Dulling.

On.

Flicker strokes across glossy surface, catching the mirror-image contortion of the curved face that in turn repeats the surface flicker down through its striated internal structure. Cascades of indicator light glance through interior surfaces. Light flickers through smooth salival texture, a diaphanous quality that moves at high speed throughout internal layer of spit's surface tension. Crystalline air pockets inflect beam, diverting and distorting light flow into spectral expanses that cast modulated colours through and between other pockets. Clots of mucosal torsion pull and slow light refraction. A glaucous quality of light clouds inside spit-structure, pooling into a muddy depth that weighs heavily in the subsurface.

Light mixes with liquid formations. Down through the depths of spit, illumination unfolds within discrete pockets, whilst material variation channels and forms light into novel particulars bearing only loose resemblance to orange-flash clarity of indicator. A pattern of illumination moves through spit. Collisions, conjunctions, scatterings of textural light-flicker pool into strange patterns. A viscous, shifting luminosity pervades, morphing through repetition of indicator flash. Mechanical inflection. Concision of click.

On.

Off.

Repeat.

Each flash catches spit-lump, angles change through motion, and the continuous stream of the measured impulse is caught and distributed in a disjointed measure within spit.



On.

On.

On.

Off.

Flashes overlap.

Motion of car pulls indicator through shifts of position, with each flash beaming forth on substance and cascading through material in discrete illuminations, flickering between structures at different angles. Proliferation and variegated reflection.

One flash, then another.

Light traverses spit with each on-off click. The downward cascade catches and modulates multiple clashings of light-flicker. A single flash is drawn out into a plural lighting that confounds its simple trajectory.

One flash, then another.

Substratal pooling of light is replenished, revitalised and clashed. Overlaps, obliterations. Confluences and counterflows. Fading light meets the sharply new. Repeat illumination, ethereal quality.

One flash, then another.

Clashed light superposes luminosity in shifting registers. This bubble glistens, then that. Incandescent points scatter across a dulled surface. Highlighted facets and textural variation. Patterning-light shifts, drawing inflections across surface tension.

One flash, then another.

Scattered points of incandescence. Spit takes on the appearance of a microcosmic celestial sphere. Humble dome of heavens seen from above. Light clash

observance, soaring celestial vision. A small cosmos, drawn up gutturally, ejected onto ground.

One flash, then another.

Refractions, scatterings. Mists of colour. Orange hue shifts through spectral transitions from steady frequency of single-note artifice to dispersed patterns of enormous variation. Tonal shifts multiply from plural illumination. Rich modulation scatters through spit.

One flash,

Below surface tension, luminosity spans taut arc. Air pockets continue refrain of light dispersal, spreading luminescent constellations of light pattern across surface span. Soaring clarity of high-gloss light breaks down through surface, scattering as distinct channels. Meeting attenuations of subsurface material, variations of resistance confront light channels. Cascades fall inflected. Multiplied intensities sprawl across heavenly expanse. Revelations, oblique passages, clouding and dismissal. In places, crystal clear focus, the sharpness of a diamond; in others, greyed and stripped of clarity, pooled light forms, only mere trace of initial inflection retained. Shadows span spit skies. Light breaks through. Patterns of luminous dispersal cast down offer positions of occupancy: lingering in the glow, caught in the flattened world of shadow, passing carefully along a channel of interference. Such positions inflect world below celestial arc of spit. The fall of light marking shifts of visibility as intensities of light pull out or mask material shifts. The rich underworld of spit unfolds heterogeneity, variously lost and discovered with alternating inflections.

then another.

Light-flicker spreads through taut surface, traversing each singular consistency within the multiple composition. A sensory invasion that momentarily modifies the

textural composition of the whole, recomposing tiny universes within each pocket of air. Crystalline constellations arc across air-pocket universes. Secondary cascades illuminate each part with a singular clarity. Maps could be drawn across these universes, composing or cataloguing by light-inflected nuances. All crystal-clear refractions. All murky pools of lost light. One by one the spectral distributions ordered carefully by colouring, the most dark to the most luminescent. The red-hued. The yellow-hued. The consistently illuminated across time. The shadowed, never lit. Each and every bubble drawn into shifting collectivities, held carefully within the surface tension that scatters the first flickers of light. Modulations in texture, material composition, luminescence and colouring draw up possibilities for nuanced facets of tiny universe. A celestial sphere, twisting to life within spit's taut surface. Above, conflictual patterns disperse across surface of spit, coloured from without and from within. A coagulated threshold where worlds meet. Once more, clashing.

One flash, then another.

Down, through and between multiplicitous components, light is cast in and out. Each stroke of regulated flash across taut, gloss surface repeats confluence of light strokes in and out. The incorrigible reach of indicator-flash drawing disparate connection into rigid spread of luminous agency. From a distance, spit is conspicuous. A pulsing reflection distinct from the absorptive surroundings of cobblestone street.

Spit sticks out. Illumination draws spit into broad network of repeat-flash map whilst highlighting its strange presence in the world. The continuity of spit-surface glimmer and refractive surface that snags and diverts light flash, pulls spit into world composed through indicator flash.

Spit, distinct expulsion. Out and into the world from the habitual interior of a warm body. From one world into another. A shift of infra-terrestrial positions. Alien contexts collide. From world of wet mouth to world of cobbled street. Intersection and confrontation. Spit meets flash and irrevocable occurrence alters world.

A cascade of light from singular position, cast around world and caught in surface tension of spit. Snagging and distorting, tension inflects light spread and spit is entangled in composed world.

Flash moves beyond and from singular source builds world. Projection of movement sticks to glutinous connection of spit's subsurface particularities. Light flow contorted, illumination directed along instantaneously fabricated paths. Parallel and inflected forms pass between and through one another.

Indicator flash comes first. Then light scatter as cascades begin. Flash delineates paths, this, then this, then this. Collision with spit pulls surface glimmer and subsurface poolings into drawn out relation with clear antecedence.

Spit hits ground. Spreads, span. Multiplicity of particularities contort to one another: some resist, some combine. Between each subsurface distinction, possible paths. From this or that part to this or that other part. Part to part, links are composed. Yet not from just one or another singularity, but from each and every possible variation without ordered precedence. Thus not always that following this, but inversions too. Abrupt halts, rapid transitions, distinct linkages, all unfold under surface tension of spit. Light gets lost along the way, following discrete and continually reforming links, but pulling through each of these mutable possibilities a clear, ordered clash of origination. Hybrid paths could thus be followed. Chaotic and spontaneous links within subsurface of spit are threaded through with the needlepoint accuracy of an

originary and traceable event of flash. Pulled out of compositional indeterminacy into a structured plot of heterogeneous material and spontaneous link formation.

Indicator arm shows going left. Points towards determination and in context of convention that calms chaos of possibilities.

Span enfolds, holds itself. Tension across arc retains consistency. Shifting substrata do not disturb implacable persistence of span. Across a multiplicity, held.

The repeat-flash draws affective attenuations through the mucosal nestle of air pockets. Bubbles repeatedly gain and lose composite illumination whilst retaining consistent relation to other bubbles. Reflective trace of light flickering across the surface of air pockets is retained across a span of gesture.

The indicator flash casts around a world with a mechanically inflected repetition whilst variations of light-flicker catch and proliferate through subsurface intensity of spit. Caught and refracted light from spit alters world irrevocably, whilst the curious striation of reflective membrane captivates the driver's retina for a moment of unreflective seeing. Transversal trajectories slice through, enable bizarre proliferations.

As sunlight flickers down through ocean, and as watery body takes on mediated colour of heavens, so spit englobes light flicker whilst dispersing its multi-hued glow throughout surface tension. Underneath, coloured consistencies show marked and inflected distinctions, whilst through drawn out time of repetition, flash illuminates shifting patterns. Positional shifts outlined, new allegiances, new interactions.

Scattered light distinguishes nuanced textures under surface of spit. Viscous saliva and glutinous mucus, pockets of once-breathed air, defiant shards of dirt drawn in through material sprawl. The viscosity of spit globule pulls across these

multiplicities of weight, texture and material. A constant traction. Under surface tension one discrete part then another link together.

Conceptual composition unfolds from illuminated bubbles. Tiny universes of affective potency open within the interstitial tensions drawn around the perimeters of the caught air pockets. Reciprocal inflections occur through clashing.

Alternate descriptions of world can be elaborated from this interplay. A world alone pulled between mechanistic switch of indicator, spit on cobble and retinal intrigue. A parallel world of indicator flash, bystander halt and mouth's formation of mucus and saliva. Clashing of a momentary halt to daily progress and rudimentary bodily operations.

Worlds meet through protuberances. Indicator flash casts through multiple worlds whilst some of these proliferations return to meet in the substantial persistence of spit. Sprawls knot back into one another through these characters of confluence, nodes of tangled possibilities and convergences of proliferation that articulate or splice spreads of world together.

Transversal cross-cuts slice. Composed figures and affects slice the immanent casting of a thought. Conceptual personae and consistent, intensive concepts slice through compositional world. Fleeting adventures of sensory and conceptual arisings jump from planar fidelity to alien worlds, across and back again, carrying strange materials and odd inflections. The flickering light spreads through spit bubbles, glancing through one to another before following a flung-out trajectory into world. Spit draws out odd persistence, holding consistency indefinitely through affective modulations. A curious togetherness of spit bisects the pace of the on-off flash as it moves through an environment constructed by the transitory consecration of its gesture.

Spit explains function of indicator in drawing up worlds. Repeat-flash cast through and between air pockets illuminates the multiple structures held within a consistent collectivity. Transversal slice cuts against power. Hierarchy and propriety refuted in the slice of another world.

Click on.

Spit.

Click off.

Jut.

It comes. Strange allure, strange force. Through that, into this. No prescience or auspices. Just through. One thing through another, that through this. A shard through a plane, a shoot through the ground, a crack through silence.

It juts. Not awaiting a name, a science, a model. Just the operation of *it*, without logic or coherent assembly. It and nothing more. Instantaneous at times; lingering, permanent at others. Thus no real temporality, and no propriety either. That through this, without coherent method or process. Just testament: a jut occurs.

Right through this, one world through another. Pressing through, as alien, as unknown. Not substrate through layer, not tectonic shift, although these certainly are juts. Rather, not only tectonic or substratal, but other orders, other logics too. The obverse is a jut, so too the faceted visage of the diamond. It is not clean dehiscence, it is not obvious faults, it is not simply this, then this, and so on. No expectancy then, no planning or strategizing either. Simply an event without prefiguration, except the singular and incomplete figuration of a jut.

A jut occurs. Always in a world, always through a world. As and through a world a jut opens worlds. One world to another, one world in another. Opens and configures, adjusts and breaks apart.

One world into another. As event, a jut occurs in the overlapping of worlds. What is embodied in a jut is the gap of overlapping, what comes from a jut is the residuum of an overlap of worlds.

A jut occurs, shocks. A shock of overlapping. An entanglement prior to conjunction, the *and* waiting to be uttered collapses on the lips of he who was about to speak.



The shock is the moment of the jut's occurrence, the delay of the conjunction is the drawn out cadence of the resolution. The conjunction always comes in the end, but the delay is always singular, specific and drawn out of the event itself.

A jut. A meeting like no other meeting. World within world, not a rarefied event, but as always differing. A jut, always a meeting like no other. Shock, large or small. The event carries its own particularities: quiet, explosive, tedious.

One world in or through another. Shock, then conjunction. The delay of the and brings its own alienation, a strange separation from a familiar world. But the resolution is never quite complete. Alienation remains, lost in a world already constituted around a major resolution. What's left is unsuitable, a curious and intractable distance.

Overlapping, not contiguous outline, not a tailoring of edge to edge, but an unwanted conjunction: this and that. Pressed together through conjunction, disparities linger on the outskirts. The simple operation of the conjunction ignores the esoteric composition of the extremities in favour of lukewarm commonality. The problem of conjunction is not the problem of putting this and that together, but rather the problem of the remainder of this putting-together. Outside edges of counter-position are trampled in the rush for fitting, and in this way texture disappears. The simple nature of the resistant bittiness of this or that, the grotty lint at the edge, is discarded into an excrescent outside part.

The conjunction of a jut resolves. Yet resolves without perfection, a cadence that crackles and distorts at the edges. Resolution with cracked edge; bits, remnants in the world. The dusty parts of an event remain. Residual, conflicting, problematic.

A dusty remnant, named himself. From a loose effectuation of fibres pulled together a visage takes shape, a dissemblance. A façade that can only really be called himself, for want of a better name.

One world in or through another, and for a moment an opening prior to the conjunction. That moment before faltering on the lips: an opening of a world without world. Without-world and therefore no world. What opens, prior to the resolution of the and, is without-world.

With the conjunction, without-world as it opened, snaps shut. Things match up, edges align, there is a tightening of the moment and without-world, for the most part, resolves. Yet the conjunctive snap kicks up dust, a remainder of the action. The overhangs, the folds, the frays, the excess, all drop out of the tidiness of the conjunctive snap, and all are still without-world.

Thus the remainder from the periphery that had no stake to begin with, is now without a proper place. It has the quality of a detritus of sorts, a drifting and insubstantial pressure. What remains without-world takes on the quality of a strangeness, an infinite strangeness of which it can only be said that himself is without proper place. What is left is improper in every possible sense. A remainder, without-world, and here called himself.

Before the conjunctive snap, without-world is a call, after the snap a mere whisper. But in both measures, without-world summons an image of an individual. A call or a beckoning comes from the suspension and dispersal of one world in another, this call being the potential of worldlessness.

Pale, stuttering enunciation. Disembodied voice, lost for a moment amongst things, only to resurface. Taut, sharp; then hesitant, almost translucent once again. A call without words but beckoning, addressed to no-one in particular. Extended, diffuse,

a spider's web cast in and through. Snagged, drawn tight. Then in places drifting loose, unfinished or broken. A certain trenchancy to the voice, withdrawn but emphatic. Conviction is not lacking, but only resides in snatches caught on occasion.

Yet the impending snap cuts such a call short. Shutting down ambition, crushing potential. The lingering, dispersed whisper of without-world persists with himself. At once acknowledgement, and in the same gesture refusal, of without-world. Himself holds in the infinite strangeness of relation without-world, but holds still to a relation that is persistent but incomprehensible. Himself is beyond reach, always out of place, continual oddity. Thus the call to an individual is sustained, the potency left open, but the double absolution that an individual demands is rendered impossible by the simple isolation of without-world in a relation of strangeness.

Himself, as but one name for a collation of residues, measures out simultaneously the extancy and impossibility of the appeal to an individual. Extant: it had existed as promise; impossibility: always asymptotic measure. One never quite arrives on time. The sublime crescendo of an individual's self-realisation never quite comes. Despite its promise, despite its possible beauty, always withheld in the final moments because always unknowable, and always an embodiment of the denial of its promise and beauty. Vanishing instantaneously, beatific knowledge withheld beyond because the very apotheosis of the uncommunicable may have been realised.

A stuttering mouth, timid lips open, modulated call. Himself calls with minimal assertion.

The meek whisper of himself was the muse to which Heidegger chose to listen. Restive, plaintive contemplation; a delicate hearing for a delicate matter. A quiet call left after a conjunctive snap beckoned Heidegger towards himself. Drawn in,

Heidegger listened and responded. Himself, a vision of death, showed a model of living drawn out of its own singular visage. The reversal came backwards, from death to life, a singular realisation of a singular possibility. A piercing shot from the future that went right through and gathered up excesses of this or that life. Massaging odds and ends together, sticking with plasters, tape, glue to form contours. Then drawing the moulded form back from itself into the future from which it came. Drawing in and through, assured, clear and confident. Establishing continuance by the very retention of potential, the contoured thing conforms. A confrontation with bittiness: coalesced, redrawn, formed anew.

Heidegger responded to the call with a name, “the individual.” Yet this was really the wrong name. What himself named in the call, and what Heidegger gathered in all but name, was the singular being.

It had modulated to a whisper: pale, stuttered enunciation. A call from himself summoned a singular being, not an individual.

What Heidegger missed in the corpse was the moment of the gap after the corpse had come to perfectly resemble himself. As if, after the spectral image lay down and back into the body in repose, the process set in motion by himself was complete. It was as if in that moment of perfect confluence, Heidegger closed his eyes and turned his head away, having seen affirmation, having seen beauty. Blanchot however continued to look. Captivated and drawn in Blanchot saw the moment yet to come. He saw the moment after the overlap, the continuance of the spectral body into the corpse, the still persistent inward motion that collapsed the outside into itself. A moment in which the spectral became the most complete and the body began to look like a tired approximation.

Himself calls and displaces the centre, the threaded and drawn in and through. The stitching that himself sets out and draws in, pulls a centre out of itself. Rending inside from out, himself calls expropriation. Always drawing attention to the lack of a proper place, to the excessive and the without-world.

The call expropriates. He becomes himself and “we are beside ourselves”. The move always draws out that image of perfect immanence, the origination of that which shot through and the confrontation for which himself names here. The corpse, immanence par excellence, is shown as himself to be the same murky and unfinished ontological hesitancy as he who responded to the call.

Decomposition, perfect figure of self-actualisation, composes the body proper outside of itself. Always expository, but further, always expropriatory, always drawn into and out of worlds.

A corpse juts. Through one world and another the corpse draws out new but strange relations. Relations of oddity, but relations nonetheless. Corpse, from that world, strange and eccentric world on the outskirts of world, but still in relation. Still retained with the worn-out and relentless testimony of the dedication, the tribute, the headstone. Entombed through worlds of monument and mourning, continual displacement, continual expropriation of this or that part into this or that world. Not the proper and complete figure of immanence then, but always the impropriety of expropriation rendered within the figure of immanence.

The work done by such a figure is a work of undoing. A meticulous picking-apart of stitches. An inside job, from the body of immanence to the expropriative part of the immanent body. Threaded out, drawn apart, let go.

What is left is an incomplete figure. Stuttered then abandoned enunciation. The half-formed, then deformed word: bastard portmanteau. Slipping from the lips without

clear conception, somewhere between guttural grunt and slurred articulation. It is not clear what, if anything, is said. Yet something is said, and now something remains in this world. Spat out, abandoned.

Half-finished wouldn't be the right characterisation, rather half-started; abortive figuration, difficult to grasp. Picked up the wrong way round, circulated speculatively in the hands, a squint, held up to the light, circulated again then replaced with frustration the wrong way round.

A corpse juts. Shock, then calm. A voice says of the corpse that "he becomes himself" as worlds resolve.

Knotty bequest. A left over part and the illusion of stability. Rest of the corpse, false repose that is too still, too static, too placed, weighs heavily into the ground of the present. So heavily it does not move with a present, but stabilises another orbit of temporality, anchors a time of repose without time.

Heavy placing.

Deep repose.



# OBELISK

Public square. Flat, open plane. An octagonal span partially describes square's edges. Geometric forms stacked. Coincident centres articulate relation. Symmetrically, at each corner of the octagon, a headless statue. Vigilant, without looking. Corporeal insistence, stone-heavy platitudes. Eight guards stand, linked by geometric assurance of the octagon. Straight line to straight line, join articulated rigorously through 45-degree angle.

Atop these eight regular angles, the rigidity of the geometric form rises vertically into an embodied figure. Headless concretion, stock-still on the meeting of two edges. Vigilance not just from insistent stare without eyes, but pulled up from geometric assertion of octagon too: absolute assurance of measure. Implacable angle finds figuration in the towering stance of statue. The specific character of the angle drawn up into the world, from abstract generality to embodied specificity: here stands headless, risen up from an absolute measure.

Across the plane all angles add up: a known and repeatable summation. Each integer of such an equation drawn up into the world with a marker that pulls through some of the abstract power.

Slow ascent quickly speeds to uncontrollable ejection. Abstraction arising in a perverted, unshackled form. The vitality of the arising become too much, ascent from within the abstract edifice of the plane become too vertiginous. Statues, unable to fully convey geometric assurance into the world explode upwards, coming to rest headless. Obliterated in the frenzy, heads are scattered throughout the square, distributed amongst so much other detritus.



At the centre of octagon stands ruined obelisk. Dead-centre virile projection, ending abruptly in a jagged mass of crumbling stone. Crude grandeur. Around the base, still holding the bearing of a noble protrusion, lies the remnants of the once heavens-bound pinnacle. A tragic debasement, the measured assurance of the tip pulled down onto the plane below. Scattered. Unidentifiable components lie here and there.

Relations of certitude can be drawn across the plane. A measurable insistence rather than haphazard distribution. Stark and barren rationalisation erupts into the now tragic remnant of eight headless statues and a ruined obelisk.

Vertical projection that exploded statue heads also obliterated obelisk summit. A stump left, making a flawed and desperate search for the celestial.

Approaching the deserted square from the northern side, the now broken shadow of obelisk is cast down over a small plaque in the ground. Inlaid precisely upon its tarnished surface, a small and unremarkable inscription reads: MONUMENT TO BATAILLE.

# Sacrifice

*Time past*

Once, some time past, a bolt of lightning tore through the skies. Great crackles of illumination spread through fabric of night. Thrown from heavens above, it sought an earth below.

Gratification, a grand old oak was struck ferociously. Pure caprice. A vicious enlightenment struck down. Celestial strike brought no beauty, no grace.

The heavens joined with the earth. Gods worked into the world following terrible emissary.

A moment later the tree collapsed.

A scarred stump left, rooted and waiting.

### *A gathering*

A lightning-struck tree stump. A circular assembly of figures. All shrouded by the clear night spread under the forest canopy. An implacable silence.

A single figure steps forward from the edge of the clearing, walks slowly towards the centre of the circle, and on arrival turns and lowers himself backwards over the stump. Figures follow, closing the circle tighter.

Blade raised in two hands. Arms arcing overhead then driven down. A bizarre conflict of motions: the geometric incision of the blade as it slips through epidermal layers into muscle tissue, and the instability of the convulsed, tentative arms plunging the hardened abstract into the soft resistance of supine body.

A stab in the heart. First and final blow of night's enclosure.

All dark.

## *Clearing*

Spilt night of the wound disperses. The forest and the stars open to the translucent night of the world once again.

Left in the clearing, a profound and appalling separation: a body slumped across the stump, a head on the forest floor. The blade that struck the first blow lies nearby. Encircling figures still gathered, assembled around the perimeter of the clearing.

Head removed, as if to rationalise the process. No more profundity, no more nobility. A headless corpse and a bodiless head. Seat of thought perversely resplendent on the forest floor. An after-thought to the strike that kills: cut down to size.

A moment of calm spreads throughout the forest clearing. Silence denser than before, bearing a thickness that muffles. Words spoken instantaneously absorbed. Calm pools into long waiting without a measure of time. Span merely counted out in a haphazard manner by the darkness, the silence, and the faint glimmer of barely moving stars scattered across the heavens.

A bizarre conjunction of moments holds this waiting across stretched and incongruous time. Interrupting steady counts the headless body presses against the lightning-struck stump. In this moment a concatenation of events superimposes times through acrobatic leaps: heavens rent, lightning bolt, blade strike, once-standing tree, hellish repose of body, absent head. Scattered and veiled, group witness this opening as events slip between strange temporalities. Apparition of tree, ghostly rendition of lightning bolt striking head off figure, head falling from branches, explosive crackle of lucidity from bolt, span of heavens opening wide, tree sees, headless figure sees.

One over another, mirages enact exchanges across spans of time. Events come apart, lose order, coalesce into other exchanges. The bolt, the tree, the headless body

merge into interlocked possibilities, as if just such an exchange had forever existed.

All circling, lost in time.

For a moment all overlaps. Figures watch from the shadows, captivated until occlusive night disperses fully and the correlations of discrete moments unfold.

Festivities abate as night clears into night. Light pervades and the stars flash down, forgetting the need to bear witness and returning to simple illumination. Under the clear skies, in the now unclouded clearing, body remains. Encircling figures pass into and through one another whilst dispersing into the trees.

Times passes. Heavens rotate. Celestial bodies shift overhead, their light modulating night of the clearing.

Patience pervades.

Indefinite waiting continues.

## *Arisen*

Twitch.

Arising abrupt and imperious.

Bold, noble calm as body lifts to feet. Magisterial standing. Headless body surveys surroundings. First tree stump, then up to the heavens before intently scanning the periphery of the clearing. Body slowly turns until coming back full circle to the tree stump. An untroubled and patient looking. Finished observing, body takes a step to one side of the stump and pauses before bending down to pick up discarded head and dropped blade.

Taking a step back and sitting on the tree stump, body places the missing head into its lap. Beginning an incisive and methodical procedure the hands work the blade patiently around the head. The process of cleaning the skull of excess matter takes time.

First flesh incised. A bloody halo traced around the cranium leaves skin in two. Top of scalp lifted clean off with undercutting of blade. Red-dulled skull below revealed. Lower part of skin sliced twice. Once from brow to throat, straight through the line of the nose. Once from back of head to nape of neck. Head opens like a flower. Crimson interior blossoms into the world. Fibrous tissue sticks, then gives to persistent scraping of blade. Bone-dull scrape works tirelessly. A meticulous action moving this way then that across contours of the skull: cheek bones, fine detail of the jaw line, small cranial indentations. Flesh peeled until flayed fully open and dropping off.

Skull retains residue of previous life. An all-over scrape of blade travels across contours, patiently collecting leftover material. A soft carnation mass gathers across the cutting edge.

Remaining vertebrae pulled out. Sorry chain scattered onto the ground.

A firm blow of the hilt. Cartilage smashed. Nasal cavity opens without encumbrance of nose. In the point of blade goes, circling round and round, gathering excess material.

Tip slips deep into right eyeball. Easy motion through soft mass. A downwards lever and out pops the whole lot, trailed by the retinal cord. A swift slice and eye liberated from final anchor. Then onto the next. Action repeated. Two hollow sockets left. In the point goes once again, circling around the inside of the sockets, carefully gathering internal matter.

Skull placed on forest floor. A stamp of the foot splits jaw off. Teeth scatter and bone splinters. With mandible dispatched, skull is recovered from ground. Excess of mouth, gums, palate, remnants of throat and tongue relent to continuing inquisition of blade.

Scoring round skull, blade carves a clean line that frames the face like a mask. On the blade circles, working deeper into cranial bone until a single blow splits head in two. Brain emerges from between two halves, then grabbed tight in the hand and ripped free, sent tumbling to the ground below. Back of skull follows, dropped too. Blade sets to work once more, scraping missed remnants from the inside of skull, working through inverted contours to separate life from bone below.

Procedurally slow, meticulous cleansing leaves a hollowed, scraped-clean skull free from residue of living matter. A head liberated into the artefactual realm.

Process complete, body stands, leans forward then places the cleansed skull over the groin with eyes staring out. A moment of fusion, skull holds.

Standing once again, alert and imperious, body thrusts blade deep into stomach, cutting a circle around the abdominal muscles. Clean, bloodless incisions meet, the flesh is pulled off. A shiny knot of intestines bared to the world, labyrinthine

complexity of digestive life. The cut flesh is dropped to the ground and body leans forward again, this time almost doubled over. The empty hand is thrust through the hole stabbed in the chest, site of first strike. With a wrenching motion the hand returns clutching between the fingers a flaming heart. Standing upright again body arcs back, and reaching towards the heavens with blade promptly slices two stars from the fabric of the sky. Celestial light scatters amongst the trees as the stars drop into the forest clearing. Basked in starlight body strides one way then another, picking up each of the fallen stars. Carefully, the stars are placed on the chest, one over each nipple. Body stands upright, rigid. Then raises arms horizontally, one holding blade and the other flaming heart: perverse crucifixion.

A moments pause.

Magisterial!



## Night

A stab in the heart. First and final blow of night's enclosure.

The blow, as a strike of lightning, cuts with ferocity and a burning-star clarity. An incision within the stop of time right through the earthly body. A stab of the divine pulling the lightning strike of indefinite time-past into the moment of the killing strike. Spilling out the wound in the chest, a pool spreads through the clearing. An engulfing accompaniment to the life expelled by blade strike. The dark of the forest increases in density. Veils of night draw over the surrounding figures.

Time flayed open.

The divine strikes down into the world and a crackle of connection leaps out of the encounter between heavens and earth. Sprawling outwards, the linking static of relation pulls the clearing into the strike. Time stands as worlds link: blade, lightning, celestial arc, supine body, the heavens and the earth.

Within opened time life passes. The light of the stars bears witness to the passing, and in the rent-open time group is engulfed in contagious convulsion. Limbs shake, muscles tense, postures change, cries unleash, laughter, screaming. Life passing spreads as ripple of laughter, one body after another contorted.

Outside. Outside all. Figures convulsed. Things disappear. Night consumes. The terror of occlusion is met with tears of joy, streaming from eyes that can discern nothing but the black of night. Cataractual clouding renders the world indefinite. Even the hardened clarity of the sacrificial tool lost to the veil of night.

In dark spill, edges occluded. All washed over. Figures, once discernible, disperse. Distinguishable here or there only by eruptions of laughter or spontaneous cries. Centreless ecstasy given over to generality of night. Convulsions disperse

throughout spilt darkness. From one burst of laughter to another trails can be drawn, linking ecstatic expulsions in the very fabric of night.

One after another figures cavort backwards. Trembling bodies, convulsing with ecstatic joy, lose stable centre. The imaginary thread pulled through from top of head to tips of toes appears as if snapped. No longer interested in rigid deportment, bodies flail as if possessing gyroscopic centre. Creased down the middle. Tipping over. Tumbling backwards. Falling. Bodies unravel, from soporific enclave into world of darkness. Hypersensitive, destabilised, as if exposed tissue. Vertical thread breaks, body collapses, isolation disappears: all from simple touch of night.

Bodies tumble and spread. An orgy of touching. Night holds trembling in repose, and body after body incline into one another. Worlds open. Worlds spread.

Bodies fall outside, exposed to terror of occlusion. Individual vacillates then disappears, perversely transfixed by coercive touch of night drawing out into world.

Bodies scatter.

Above, placid stars continue to bear witness, linked through the lightning-strike of the blade in a gap of measureless time to the clearing below. Glistening down onto the forest clearing, star light doesn't penetrate the darkness, but the steadfast gaze of the celestial takes in the punctuations of laughter and crying escaping from implacable night.

Below, encircling figures indistinguishable. Only laughter erupts, spreading outside of edges that cease to exist, leaping from ecstatic projection to ecstatic projection. Night, the indiscernible: occlusive persistence, figures indistinct.

With the testimony of laughter and witnessing of the stars, body at the centre of the clearing lies, supine under the dark burden of engulfing night. Laughter continues in the gap of time, erupting in pockets around the centre of the clearing.

Time waits.

## *Fable*

Some time past, a lightning bolt struck down from the heavens. Meeting a great oak, the bolt joined the celestial and the terrestrial in one incisive moment. A second later, from the sheer force of conjoining, the tree collapsed. Left was a scarred stump with roots buried deep, nourished by the subterranean brimstone that surged under the earth's mantle.

Later, a group of figures quietly assembled. One by one they encircled the stump at the centre of the clearing. The group waited, silent and motionless until a single figure stepped slowly to the centre of the clearing. The figure stopped and lay down backwards over the stump. Eyes stared intently to the empty heavens above. Body spread across stump, a moment of resonance, as if time knotted, bent back upon itself. Standing tree and supine body linked through the empty heavens.

Figures stepped out from the forest canopy into the clearing isolated under celestial arc. Overlapped times endured. All the while silent circle enclosed more tightly around the stump. Closer the bodies moved until knotted together and almost indistinct. Then, another figure stepped forward from the circle and stood next to the awaiting-supine. A blade drawn and raised high above the head. All the while starlight reflections scattered.

Time slowed.

Hard. Abstract. Puncture. Blade into heart. Incision opened. Time caught out. Body convulsed. Flesh rent. Spill.

Darkness.

Time distended.

They say everything stopped but a terrible laughter.

Later, darkness cleared.

A body, slumped over the stump. Hole in the chest. Decapitated. Head on forest floor, solemn and troubling; blade nearby, still catching heavenly illumination.

The clearing was calm and silent, unnerving around terrible scene. The air was thick, silence not pure and still but muffled and oppressive.

Body slumped. A great collision of worlds. Knotted time returned. World through world, overlappings tumbled. Superimposition: the light, the heavens, the earth, the tree, the roots, the brimstone, the body, the offering, the blade, the incision, the spilt night, the head removed. All knotted together in single figure of body slumped over lightning-scarred tree stump.

A twitch.

Up. Vertical. Rigid.

Out of the great knot of time body stood. A long look surveyed the clearing, slow circulation followed by a gaze deep into the heavens above. Then, as if knowing, body moved one way then the other gathering the head, then the blade, from the forest floor.

Body sat back down on the stump. A slow, methodical scraping began. Blade cleared the living remnants from skull. Once finished, skull affixed to the groin: a substituted outward glare.

Then stood, blade incised stomach. Right around the cutting went, until a hole opened and the intestines were exposed to celestial illumination.

The hand was plunged deep into the stabbed hole in the chest. Out came the heart, wrenched in a fist, flaming.

A long reach upwards with blade. Two stars sliced from the sky dropped to the clearing, scattering heavenly light. Then picked up and attached to the chest, one over each nipple.

A moments pause.

Magisterial!



# “Behold Acéphale!”

## *Chorus*

“Behold Acéphale!” a chorus of voices proclaim. Clamour erupts from heart of clearing as body arises.

“Behold Acéphale!”

Arisen beatific, Acéphale resplendent in clear night.

“Behold Acéphale!”

Arms spread. Heart aflame. Blade scattering starlight. Stump of neck open wide to celestial imprecations, scarlet red, beckoning.

“Behold Acéphale!”

A turn and a departure, Acéphale marches off into night.

All calm.



## *Clamour*

- He died! Then lives!
- After the blow, after the dark, a return. Headless god who beat death. From one world to another and back again. This world left then this world returned to.
- But what's changed? Arisen to what world? To our world, or a world its own? Such violence fecundating the new.
- Exuberant birth from other world!
- A blow was struck. Clarity of focus, like the point of a diamond. Abstract entered, darkness spilt. Such night as never seen.
- Not seen at all! Felt. Thickness of night spilt into night. The blow struck then all dark. What strangeness!
- World dispelled by a blade. Night spilt, and then what world? All was occluded, as if seeing through cataract. Heavy enclosure, world dispersed.
- Out of this world and into another. But then back again. Back into this world, in part at least. Between two worlds. One spilt into another. Darkness shrouded but things overlapped.
- Felt as if dead too. Everything changed. What past spilt forth? As if spilling from here too. Spilling and spilling, what mixes in the darkness? Life, or death? Not dead. But spread of night confounds. Body was convulsed, but not terror of end. Joyous convulsion. What world now?
- No more things could be seen. Night occluded. Eyes no longer saw edges. Distinctions collapsed. Eyes focused on shroud of darkness. Could not look away.
- But detail, persistent detail. Night thick with it. Whole universe held in heavy occlusion. Fabric pulled across world, but more worlds came, floating before the eyes. Just there, half-buried in the darkness. The eyes stopped seeing, then saw more richly

than before. So much material to see. So much material yet to be seen. But other worlds, what promise.

- When blade pierced, disappeared. The night spilt, ink-black. Heavy opacity swallowed whole. But it came as if through, as if body funnelling. Blade, solicitation of the abstract, rich concentration of night. The strike, the tight-focus, the spill, then the body funnels. Body disappeared first, swallowed at the source by rich consumption of spilt night. It spread through. One by one, disappearance. Engulfed, choked, blinded, swallowed whole. The night of the clearing disappeared and spilt night pervaded. Indistinct bodies, still there, consumed by night. But knowing not from seeing any longer.

- Beastly arising!

- Blade struck, night spilt. Out and over. The clearing awash with night, but a little part, for a moment, together in spilt night. As one and as another. What I want to say is, not subordinate.

- Head chopped!

- What was unleashed?

- The dark spilt, such a heavy occlusion, such indistinction in the end. But consumed in what savagery? Over us all from brutal incarnation, who felt what part? As one and as another yes, but what part?

- Autonomy, autonomy slipped!

- Yes, night spilt. A savage blow. Such violence comes from within. Always within. Night spills from violence perpetrated. Darkness spreads, but not as fabric of evil. Darkness spreads from wound, spreads from within as another world liberated. I felt it, the spill: autonomy dissipated.

- As one and as another!

- Animal part came out.
- Animal part, yes. Somewhere under human part, animal part came out. Came out in spilt night. I felt it. Something came out when blade struck, the night and some other part. Engulfed by the night and some other part, I trembled. I felt it, and I trembled.
- He died, but not subordinate! Tears shed. Trembling, but bizarrely. Joy, even laughter engulfed in night.
- Such a strange response from such savagery!
- The blade struck and some part came out.
- Before strike, before heavy night, he lay down but didn't look scared. No fear of death apparent, so very strange. But what to make of it? What to do?
- It looked like he died without fear; I watched without fear too.
- He was consumed by the night after consumption by the blade.
- Heavy occlusion over everything, then he disappeared.
- But consumed by killing blow before disappearance. Struck hard, right into heart of things. Not to be eaten, but as if eaten.
- Consumed and wasted by consumption!
- Swallowed by night, but for no end: no prolongation of night, no consumption for us here. Consumed to expel. Waste!
- Blade struck, night spilt: heights of divinity fell. World was different. As one and as another.
- Yes, night came and edges fell. This part and then that part, not so distant. Not even one body then another in night. Like resistance, elasticity of edge that always crashes against other edges, finally gives way. Not a snap, no, nothing so abrupt. But edges slipped, I'm sure.

- Resistance of autonomy!
- How to distinguish one from another, now, after night?
- Resistance!
- Knotty, intractable edges?
- Unassimilable.
- But in night, as night spilt, where did these knots go?
- The field, the field came up, as if from nowhere, but felt as within. What spilt, was perhaps this field from within. Parts coming out, such a brutal act. Animal act, beastly. These parts, these parts came out and resistance of autonomy goes.
- Like an excrescent part, but from within?
- Harboured, withheld. Then blade struck, night spilt and part came out. As if corpuscular resistance. Flesh breaks and animal part falls out. Or as if bodily resistance fell out. As night spilt the corpusculating part fell out, the subordinating will fell out. Withheld part opened out?
- Blade struck, autonomy opened.
- Night spilt and world changed.
- All ordering gone in night. Vertiginous fall of simple vertical. Occlusion proscribed hierarchy.
- Vertiginous fall from man-height to animal.
- Whatever was withholding collapsed and I went with it. Down, from great height into darkness. Feeling but not seeing fall. Not moving, but feeling fall with feet firmly planted. Strange experience, collapse whilst standing tall.
- And what of the gods from on high? Swallowed, swallowed whole in night?
- Vertiginous fall too, it seemed. But into abyss, into consuming darkness of night. No need, no need in that night for gods. Vertical toppled onto horizontal, as if

the ground shifted on its axis. No more projection upwards to the dark night of the heavens, when dark spilt down here and unmasked what was on high. Normally so bright in the dark, but illuminating persistence occluded when blade struck. What spilt changed the world.

- As resistance in a flow, before strike of blade. But as terror dissipated, as night grew, resistance diminished. No longer brute withholding but wilful unfurling. No longer like desiccation of world, but new-found liquidity.

- Flows passed through, embraced!

- I thought I heard whispered: “like water in water”.

- Outside, we shared.

- Such joy! Such aimless joy!

- The blade struck, and joy. As darkness spills, overwhelmed.

- But things occluded, joy spread.

- Sound too, noticeably different, as if expanded. Engulfed with words, with more than words. Such proximity, as if outside myself.

- Ecstasy!

- We were standing as if here, but outside, more outside. Exposed; stripped and exposed. Those proclivities, as before, gone! Lost in the outside, lost to the darkness.

- Occlusion, what to speak of in darkness? Heavy night spilt into night, all disappeared. No seeing, no distinction. What to speak of when not seeing?

- Couldn't find an object. But words, had words. Saturated with speaking, torrential speaking. Now, cannot recall. In the night, in the darkness, what was to be said?

- Nothing at all as had been said before. Nothing as before, as night passed into night. A fabric, occluding and connecting. Draped over whole world, voices muffled. Lost, all lost in fabric of night. Who spoke in that night? I cannot say.

- With strike of blade, it seemed like edges fell. Exposed to outside, to the new. Not easy to speak of, but in heavy night so many words. So much to speak of, it all came out, all at once.

- A sacrifice. Bizarre act in this world. But after the blow, like a new world.

- The sacred, it was here! Right before us, lost in the night that fell with the sacrifice.

- A killing blow, and then the sacred, right here! Heavy shadow, too much to see, to discern.

- Outside all, it seemed.

- The sacred came and edges fell. Tumbling, vertiginous.

- Noise too. Sound opened as cacophony when edges fell. As if outside. But here, still here and with outside.

- Terrible, hilarious. Oppression of dark poured out, and then there was the sacred as never before.

- It came! The sacred came from the inside. From inside this world to bring outside. Such a transformation! One world to another.

- The strike, the spilling, then death. Not as if before me, but as if with. I felt it, not fear, not pity, but the simplicity of it. Like death came out.

- Out of the body? Into the world?

- A spilt life, coming with the power of death. Rendered outside, life excluded, transferred. Death felt in night, sympathetically.

- Something exposed too, the outside wrapped around and something was exposed. Simple connection, as if folded out into outside. Uncreased from crumpled-over world. Shown outside, in proximity.

- Closeness to death, perhaps.

- Something spoke in night. Somethings even: more than one. What was heard, not for anything. Speaking, listening, but not for this or that thing. Not a concern about things. Something else, speaking for speaking. For communication. For outside only. Free from concern, or concern only with outside.

- Night spilt as fabric. Wrapped around whole world. Fabric shared, not as me but as us all. Each one of us, covered in dark night.

- Through and between all. Spilt from the killing blow, the night came out and we shared. One and all together. Fabric of night, felt as babbling.

- And voices! Through and between each and all. Voices wrapped, twisted in space.

- I don't know what was said, but we shared in fabric of night.

- The occlusion, the heavy occlusion after death: that was what spoke.

- Yes, the words came with the dark. Out from inside, out into the world. The outside came dark and heavy from that blow and the voices came too.

- But not just voices between, there was exuberance, from one to another.

- Laughter spread.

- And tears!

- The laughter spread the tears too.

- Joy, like an explosion in the night. Caught in heavy dampening of dark, but spread like explosion. Such ferocity, laughter everywhere. As he died, as if too laughter spilt with night from inside.

- How to attest to what was seen?
- Experienced! Seeing limited.
- Yes, experienced! Dark spilt, things occluded as if cataract.
- Gap of seeing, but still experience.
- Experienced, but not things. How to speak without things?
- He died, night spilt, things indistinct.
- But speaking, speaking of things. Always speaking of things.
- The tyranny of speaking!
- Yes, but broken in that moment. The strike of the blade and the spill of night,  
no more subordinate things.
- No subordination!
- The gods fell, crashing to earth in veil of night. Vertiginous collapse. Tumbling  
down, all tumbling down. Heavens onto earth.
- The earth off its axis too. Released from calm dominion of sun and spinning  
out of control: unleashed to magnificence of universe.
- No subordination!
- Terra, opened to measureless universe. We moved, world moved. Merciless  
spiralling forced outside. Absolute escape.
- Spilt night showed. Things occluded, but ferocity of movement was grasped  
whilst standing still.
- Standing whilst tumbling.
- Yes, vertiginous collapse and limits fell too. Simple thing, dominion of  
geometry, spilt out as edges dissipated. All fell into night, disappearance.
- The world, homogeneous no longer.
- All solids trembled. No assurance in night.



- Yes, but world still held. Occluded things, but still world.
- Other world. Another world. Same world, but distinctions.
- World opened to universe. Stark immensity, pressure of emptiness.
- Bits, bits: the heterogeneous parts. Spilt everywhere as night fell. All that stability, trembled and slipped. The edges, gone.

- Unassured, but beatific.
- Laugh, cry, all that could be done.
- Spilt ecstasy. Trembling bodies.
- But trembling in proximity. Occlusive fabric of night pulled close. Nearby, all.

In night we shared.

- Edges disappeared, difficult to speak of. But shared, yes.
- What passed in sharing? Proximity, experience, but what passed?
- Edges, edges passed?
- Laughter too. Joy. Trembling. Convulsed bodies. Ecstasy passed in spilt night.
- Passed between?
- Between, yes. From one to another. Spilt, as night. But more. More passed when edges fell. No longer world of things. No longer subordination.

- Gods fell! Edges occluded. World changed.
- Passion and ecstasy. Outside. All came outside. Communication, communication passed between us all in spilt night. Communication: us all. All of us in communication as edges fell.

- No longer separate. I felt it. Passionate connection of night, then no longer separate.
- Movement, between one another.
- But not placid.

- Not resistance either. Combative, but open.
- Something shared. Shared in common of night.
- Together! Shared together! Night spilt and together edges fell. Night shared.

Laughter, joy, tears: all shared.

- Ecstatic feeling. Truly ecstatic. Outside. Inclined outside.
- Limits fell. Inclined outside and limits fell.
- What passed between?
- Night.
- Sharing.
- Continuity! Continuous existence. Existence shared. It was me and you. Me to

you, shared. Night: common experience.

- Yes, common experience of continuous existence.
- He died! Headless being rose up!
- Died in common. Arose in common.
- And not the same world. Night spilt and world changed.
- World of no death?
- No, world of death. But not subordinate terror. World no longer scared of

death. Death and no dominion.

- No dominion?
- No tyranny. Possible death but not dominant force.
- Sacred arising!
- Arisen, the world changed. Rigid, homogeneous world no more. Death no

longer terrible end.

- Something other. Something other for another world.
- Geometric death no longer.

- Not separate. Not end. No longer apart, but close, shared. Intimate. Intimacy of death: outside, impossible, but world now distinct.

- There was no fear.
- Sacrificed!
- But no fear. The trembling, the tears, different from terror of death.
- A death for nothing.
- But for precisely no end. Not heroic, not tragic, just for no end.
- A complete waste!
- But night spilt. Waste for no end, but night spilt and world changed. Waste and occlusion from death, not tragic terror of finality. No grandeur, just waste.

- Such exuberance of night. Life given. Darkness spilt, then exuberance, ecstasy. The joy! The joy spread and raucous laughter in new world was shared.

- And shared without end. Waste, then sharing. Life given and laughter exploded.
- Head chopped, a ruthless blow! The darkness fell and the head cut clean off! As if thought severed. That noble part, gone, left on the forest floor as excess of the act of sacrifice.

- Noble protrusion rendered separate. Chopped off, dropped to the floor. Such a waste, but necessary waste: the need to remove the head!

- Tyrannical upright all gone. Straight off, back down to simple ground. Horizontal once again. Such a strange occupancy, what was once so lofty cut down to size.

- Seat of thought, discarded. All thoughts wasted, left to dirt. All those calculations, those measures, those projections. All, all cut short in an instant. No more. So much waste.

- All waste! Head gone, night spilt from within. So much excess coloured clearing, coloured world.

- Profound image: noble head and debased ground. All emerged from heavy darkness as night cleared into night. Blade spilt night, then separated torso and head in swamping dark. Not seen, but heard.

- The night, the head, the ground: terrifying prospect.

- Blade struck, night spilt, life spent. Then head removed. Killing strike spent life. Sharp precision of black, right into the body and night spilt out.

- The cold abstract into the body. A heartless strike! Blade a murderous tool. Such horror, such violence, but blade went in, placid and effortless, to release night, to release excess.

- Spilt night, pure waste.

- Spilt for what end?

- For no end. Spilt to spill, it seemed. Spilling and no more. The dark night clouded, but without purpose. No accumulation, just excess spilling forth.

- Engulfed by excess spread from strike. It pulled dark night through clearing.

Over all.

- A life spent! Night spilt as life spent. He died, as if life spent as night. All for nothing except that engulfing darkness. Nothing but occlusion, nothing but abstraction of world for moment.

- But for a moment! Life spent for a moment; the moment of night spread, engulfed, but time, where was time? Life spent for a moment distended. Night spilt into night and moment opened. Like an eternity. Standing in time like the gods, resistant, unhurried, just enduring. Time, held open as life spent.

- He died, wilfully. For another world, then for this world and for the common experience of death surely. Such luxury! To die for nothing. No glory, just death. Great anonymous, swallowing whole.

- He died for luxury?

- Life spent and night of excess: pure luxuriance. And in night how the world changed!

- Then later, no head: that nobility of human death, cut right off!

- Luxury, the expenditure of life. Such joy! Night spilt and laughter erupted. Convulsions everywhere. My body, locked in night, trembled. Great bursts, exuberant impulses, from body into world; great, raucous laughter, spread in waves throughout dark night.

- He died, excess. Then rose once again, as if living. But the terrible cutting and slicing of body, then stars fell from the heavens! The celestial, down here on earth: burning brightness.

- That starlight! Then open stomach, intestines for all to see. Those guttural knots, simple consumption. All that base matter open to the world. Fleishy machination. Digestion, so crude, so animal! Open, exposed, spent. In death, what use? Only so much unnecessary material. Exposed like a cosmic joke. Great tragedy of excess again, what need? What need after death?

- Empty labyrinth! Nothing more to hide, nothing more to do.

- The intestines, simple consumption! Taking all energy, making excess, but excess produced for production itself. All useless matter expelled. Out and room for more. Absorbing all that of use, then out, out of the body, out. Not spilt like the night, not pure excess. Necessary waste, bits needed no more, prudent economy of intestine. No use now after death, so exposed. Shown to the world, great parody at heart of

stomach. Useless, base processing. No more. Useful excess become useless contrivance. No more processing. No, no more.

- Night spilt, pure excess. Energy appeared as a cloud from within: ink black swamping. Over and through all. Spill and everything stopped: vision, starlight, mourning.

- In the heavy night nothing was done! Spill disrupted the world. Malefic liquid, it engulfed all. It swallowed. A dark weight, everything destabilised.

- It came out of the wound, but not like blood. No terror of the inside coming out, not transgressive. Unexpected and destabilising, but without terror.

- But worse than blood in some way, because not knowing. Not knowing what to do. Impacting world too! Swallowing whole. An engulfing without terror of blood, but perhaps infinitely worse. Engulfing to the point where it did not terrorise, but grabbed hold and captivated: total fascination.

- A cataclysmic conjunction, knife pierced flesh and night spilt. Death, in that moment, bound to excess, bound to luxuriant indulgence. Completely improper expenditure. Frenzied, explosive rejection of a proper death when knife went in and preserved life slipped out.

- Out with such ease!

- Death struck!

- Then trembling! Joy! Tears! Laughter!

- Such cacophony as never heard before. All impulses in heavy silence. Great torrents of sound erupted.

- But joined in with at times. The body as if out of control. Great vibrations. A grab from inside. Convulsive laughs exploded from the belly. Motion, sound, cascaded.

- As death struck night spilt. Then cascade. The same, the same experience. Irrepressible laughter whilst tears welled. Such a state, body out of control.

- Laughter, joy, spread like great spasm of energy. Night swelled and laughter exploded. As if night became common medium, space itself. Explosive instants, as if time no longer. That dark, marked the heavens, slowed time it felt. But what response to confrontation with that terrible act? Laughter and joy! Such spontaneity too.

- Convulsed, then out. Out of the body. A terrible impulse from within to outside. Into world, all inside into world. Great projections of laughter into heavy night. All outside.

- Out into night after death, ecstasies abandoned to darkness. Expanded to the world, but world after death. Irrevocable change. All lost, all dissipated in spilt night. All lost but laughter and tears.

- He died, alongside. Then outside, laughter into dark. Perverse, ridiculous to laugh in such a situation. But the body did what it wanted, the head too. Outside, outside and without control.

- He died, night spilt. But what now? World changed in darkness, so what now?

- The outside!

- Dying alongside. Folded over then unfolding. That laughter, those tears, for the outside. Convulsed projection, folded over. Great laugh ripped from the belly, threw head back to gaze occluded at heavens, then laugh pulled right from inside to beyond. World engulfed and projected to the heavens by rips of laughter. Violent laceration of the world. Held in darkness. But such rejection! Death, then laughter unfurled body and shot straight to the obfuscated heavens. All masked by heavy night.

- Folded back, inclined body. The instability of tumble. A laugh, and head thrown back. Such confusion, no space. Stood, yet vertiginous tumble; no time, laugh

erupted and dark held instant open. Slurred, distended time lit up with tumbling laughter. Inclined body fell outside.

- The outside, the incline. Bodies without. All into dark night. He died, night spilt, terrible laughter, then all outside. Such ecstasy! Outside into night, all. All into night shared. And laughter, tears, joy: shared. Together, night. Common fabric illuminated by laughter, that joyous incline!. One then another, laughter and tears projected. Shot outside into great raucous common.

- Night dissipated as laughter continued. Dark night resolved into clear night. The stars returned, the heavens seen once again. But what was witnessed: terrifying! The heart ripped right out the chest. Then that brutal incandescence. Purifying fire wrapped around heart. Not consuming flesh, but lit bright like a star. Indefinite flame. Shocking vision.

- Illuminated, clear night. As if the laughter cleared the way for the fire of the heart.

- Laughter abated, heart torn out!

- But outside, out the body too. Like a brutal laugh itself, ripped right out of the chest, then illuminating the world around.

- But after the laugh cleared night, a new world! After dying alongside the outside came and a new world. Irrevocable, irrevocable change. Inclined outside, world changed. Even after night cleared, the laughter stopped: new world still.

- Sacrificial killing for a new world. As that life taken, as blade pulled out and spilt night, world changed. The heterogeneous came right out the body. A tainted spilling came from the outside it seemed, even though spilling from within the body. The wound, a conduit. Laceration of worlds. The outside, that dark heterogeneous, spilt through. The sacrifice opened another world!



- Blade struck and world collapsed. Rigorous geometry, refined point. Precision of abstract created atrocious laceration. Brutal and concise, blade struck a confusion of flesh. A terrible meeting of calculated violence and supine tissue.

- That strike. Precise and methodical. Right in and life came out it seemed. Strike, spilling, death. The simple world opened the complex.

- Opened the night! Blade opened flesh and out spilt night. Dark and unknown occlusion. No more seeing, edges of blade disappeared. Those angles gone. Sunk deep. Heavens obscured and then that terrible laughter.

- And no more grasping. The measured world dissipated, such confusion. The tears and the trembling. The laughter too. All spread in turn into night. From that abstract strike, world occluded.

- As if completely outside, once night spilt. The blade, the killing strike, consumed. All swallowed whole in dark occlusion.

- No more calculation! The blade disappeared. All that abstraction gone. And no more calculation. Space encroached. Time distended. That spilling, persistent. The dark flood seemed continuous. Impervious to end. Totally irrational. All I could do was laugh without, laugh into night, aimless and joyous.

- He died from calculated blow. But such absurdity, the calculated and death. Killed with a contradiction! The hard and the soft, the simple and the astonishing. Blade, the homogeneous, the cause of so much excess! The spilt night, the limp corpse, the headless arising.

- A brutal vision, the corpse. Before swallowed by night, corpse made world absurd. As if a knot in the world.

- The intractable. World held in knot. After that blow, something broke into the simple world. Before spilt night. A spectral precursor. Vision of world to come. Like

occlusion of night, but condensed, more abstracted, more palatable with familiar façade.

- Yes, blade struck and the outside broke into the world. Then night, no more measure.
- In night, the laughter and the tears. How else to deal with occlusion? That homogeneous world, simple solids, lost. Lost to dark spill and then what? How to exist in this world of night? Laughter, brutish and relentless. Consumed by laughter in night. Stunning ecstasies, great outpourings of energy. The body exhausted by convulsion. But in night, homogeneous world swallowed, stunning disparity of measures proliferated: laughter, tears.
- Heterogeneous. The heterogeneous spilt! Everywhere, over all. Radical disparity. World occluded. All from simple abstract too. Such a bizarre conflation. But that world of night was a world outside. The experience of the heterogeneous: joy, laughter and tears. Great eruptions, ecstatic plenty.
- After the dark night, out came the heart. A terrible problem rendered. Horrific illumination, incandescent organ. Life, love, on fire!
- From the inside, pulled out. Rendered from within and given to the outside world as a brutal gift.
- Arising after death, heart torn out as if no longer needed.
- But no longer needed! Dead, then arisen to world after night: irrevocable change. The heart an excess. Unnecessary, so excised. Consumed by flames, eternally so. It was held aloft, worshipful posture and offering of life.
- Conflictual object. From inside to outside. Forever burning. Passing of life and limitless energy. Offered to the gods and the celestial sphere after occlusion by night. But who was there to receive this tainted gift?

- Cutting the stomach too. Intestines exposed. Confounding image, digestive life after death. That base material, that fleshy knot. Labyrinthine tracts tied together and producing excess. What need for energy after death? Exposed like a tragic joke. Mass of useless matter, knotted up and stuffed inside body. Following what thought but the interminable?

- But then that searing bright, that collapse from heavens to earth. Stars, excised from fabric of sky. A cut and they dropped. That blinding light masks, but they were definitely cut from heavenly sphere.

- A reach to the beyond. Blade held aloft, cuts from sky, I saw it too. A grasp, between earth and heavens. The earth shook, I thought, as reach pulled that dramatic celestial circulation into connection. Strange synchronicity for a moment: earth to bright stars, before stars fell to earth. Furious circulation, held for a moment by arms reaching across the heavens. The full force of the relentless gripped.

- But after, after the sacrifice, before the stars fell, he was killed. Strike of a blade into body. Body become sacred as blade pierces. Sacred body, then sacrifice. Given, not to the gods, but to the world; given for night, to release night into night.

- The sacred was dispelled some time past. He was killed, sacrificed, to dispel the prohibition. He was killed to bring the prohibited back into the world. The spilt night occluded prohibitive clarity. The sacred dispels because the sacred occludes. I see more clearly now, after this masking night, after edges disappeared. I see more clearly the occlusions and the excess. It's held, held in that sacred body. Killed, then living: what spilt as night was the absurd, the incoherent. That's why it masked, I'm sure of it. All covered over, but after receding, everything more clear because everything had been lost.

- The killing, the sacred, dispelled the world. After seeing night, prohibition changes. Night, permissive. Clear world of thing lost in night. Thing no more. All geometry loses clarity. Killing strike loses clarity too. Was it really that precise? Was it the simple abstract?

- Off with his head! No longer knowing. All that thought discarded on the ground. Yet still living!

- Up, without a head and walking around. What can be known like this?

- It could all be known; nothing could be known. What need for a head to know?

- Cut off, discarded. But in night, what need? Before cutting, night spilt from wound. In the dark, the head removed. As if for the dark, by the dark. It was his night, it was his head removed.

- Could not see the head cut off. Dark night covered all. No seeing. World became limitless, infinite extension. Thick night, full of darkness. All those things, lost. Then night receded and head was gone.

- The outside came from body, blade pierced and night released. Then world changed; that outside, how to know? What use the head when seeing occluded and not knowing how to know? The outside came with the limitless. Like a beyond that I didn't know.

- Spilt, though. Coming out body. The cold rationality of the blade did unthinkable violence. I could not know that strike, but as if the beginning of something, night spilt and outside grew. All beyond, the night. A burst of the irrational.

- Strike. In that instant, no more. A long instant, time drawn out. Distended, continual. Nothing before, nothing to come. Just a strike, just spilling. In that instant, complete inadequacy.

- No need for a head!

- Moment spread through spill from wound, but still, as if world held. Nothing to do in that instant but be swallowed by night.

- Nothing to do! Such liberty!

- Nothing done, nothing to be done. Just night, spilt from strike.

## *Relent*

Everything as before.

Tree stump bare, showing its scarred and burnt surface. Figures stand in mutual silence. The quiet of night takes over from the mute darkness. Trees rustle, things move once again. The circle of figures disperse further into the edges of the tree-lined clearing, then turning, as if synchronised, disappear into the night.

### *Celestial*

Up, up into heavens Acéphale goes. Ever skyward ascent from earth to mythic skies.  
Heavens rent, swallowed whole. Acéphale ascends, disappearing into heavenly abyss.  
Soon return the placid night skies, littered with celestial bodies: calm vision of furious energy.

Into the heavens, the sphere of gods, the sphere of myth. Acéphale now freed from earthly obligation. Set loose to roam through mythic worlds.

## *Myth worlds*

So it is that Acéphale roams. An adventure from the cloying earth to the aerated heavens. Set free on a path from the earth some time past, Acéphale ranges through the celestial still. Looking to the skies, a faint glimmer of a star, a luminescent trail of ice, or the absolving blank of space, always the possibility of glimpsing Acéphale in celestial transit.

Up, up Acéphale went from earth to heavens. Upward trajectory precipitated by strike of blade. Into and back out of body, then night spilt. Later the head is removed, then Acéphale soars. A heavenly quest from terrible, earthly strike. Not the touch of the divine, but transmutation rather in spite of the act. A kind of pure rejection, a refusal of the bundle of presuppositions that smuggled itself in with the slip of the blade into epidermis, soft fat and fibrous muscle. Presuppositions struck inward, and out spilt blank refusal. A swallowing, limitless excess. Presupposition goes dark, washed out of the wound and swallowed whole by heavy night.

The brutal earth-bound strike degrades. The work of the divine is not done. The sacrificial gesture spans deep ambiguity, a legislated killing.

The earthly strike does not connect the body to the divine. The blade incises body and the blade incises regulated conflict. No longer a simple geometry of war, massed bodies piled against massed bodies. Not the hygienic expression of excess, the terrible necessity, rather a necessity that wasn't known as such. The strike of blade into supine, consenting flesh changes the world. A strike of decisive violence, not from above, not mandated, apportioned, strategised and consented, but from the crudity of this earth. A strike expressed by this singular arm, this singular implement, into this singular body that takes on an expanded form: spilling out from singular body, body in general. A simple placeholder, a spacing. Strike here and body gives, out spills



excess, out spills night. Excess overwhelms then obfuscates. World changes, and in dark night Acéphale arises. Night, medial persistence for Acéphale: sustenance of conquest. Night clears, Acéphale soars to heavens.

Acéphale stops in this new world to take rest, to take stock. Sitting atop mountain, legs splayed either side, Acéphale drops blade to the ground. No need for implement of begetting whilst seeking respite. Extending whilst dropping, blade becomes sword. A clatter on ground, then gripped. A foot either end holds sword in place.

From one foot to another, a bridge. Blade a transit between striding legs, between one world and another.

Words echo through valley proclaiming “*le glaive, c'est la passerelle.*” Hard-edge rocks refuse, sending words scattered, illegible and distended, throughout channels of eroded earth.

The sword is the bridge. Acéphale enters heavens through strike of blade. Ascending to mountain top seat to reflect. Strike, death, then the future opens. The mythic rent wide. Acéphale ascends, then roams. The sword, the bridge.

Acéphale sits waiting amongst volcanic ash and smoke. Up here, the terror of the earth's heart erupts. Ever skyward, clouds, rock, lava. Brimstone spat from rock-formed mouths. Hellish quality of the celestial sphere: the world's excess gathered in profound accumulations.

Acéphale just such an excess. Seated, arms raised in front of stomach, hands grip flaming heart: a divine offering to absent gods. Groin-skull stares, dead-centre looking out of blank sockets. Full frontal confrontation. Acéphale waits, placid amongst heavenly fury. The flaming heart held as if world palliative, the heart burns so the world need not. Still volcanoes erupt, still heart burns. An empty offering, no

correlation: parallel events without interaction. So the heart burns, so the volcano spews.

Time passes.

Acéphale arises.

The blade picked up, back into the left hand; the flaming heart, gripped fully in the right.

Standing tall, Acéphale plants right foot on mountain top, then raises left leg up into the air with a tilt of the body. Left foot lost amongst smoke and clouds. Acéphale holds body tall. Arms now spread again either side. Intestinal labyrinth exposed once more.

Measured arising, Acéphale now towers above valleys below. Raised high, high above world. Domineering stance, a brutal celebration of power. Acéphale, lofted being. Posture held, stock still once more. Monstrous statue at head of valley, desirous of worship. Acéphale, god in waiting. Prayer commanded, a hollow gesture for a headless being. Acéphale stands, awaiting adulation, awaiting tribute. Pray for the heart, pray for the blade, pray for the stars, pray for the intestines, pray for the skull, pray for the headless. Limitless domination, a tyranny of all-looking. No head, always looking without being seen.

Off! Off into the heights of the skies Acéphale launches. From still-standing to aerial trajectory. Acéphale soars, tearing furiously through the heavens. Blurred valleys left behind in ascent to celestial. Deep into the heavenly canopy Acéphale travels. Heavy skies surround.

Arms outstretched above absent head, flight of Acéphale led by flaming heart and blade. A symbolic charge, sacrificial props propelled ever-upward. Acéphale led

by the conjunction that bears responsibility for release into mythic worlds. Legs outstretched below, Acéphale soars vertically.

Landing on torrid seas, Acéphale strides forward, long steps overcoming swathes of space, whilst torrents of waves rage below. Skies thick with volcanic ash carried on swirling winds. Acéphale strides unhindered. Implacable presence. Sheer indifference.

Flaming heart held aloft to meet stormy skies. Fire burns bright against heavy clouds. Erupting still, volcano further blackens stormy skies. Ash clouds linger, mixed with earth blasted from below into temporary liberty of sky. A lightness before heavy fall.

Striding freely across the world, Acéphale continues mythic conquest whilst tempestuous world rages below.

Abrupt halt.

Transmutation.

Acéphale become Acéphale-Dionysos. Body recomposed. New props gathered.

Acéphale crouches, down on bended knee. Left hand holds grape vine tight, bacchanalic spirit torn up from ground. Raw intoxication. A snake wraps around left leg reaching for the vine. Blade, now held in the right hand, stabs again into the chest. A fresh wound vent, night spills once more, pooling below and behind, threatening to consume in totality the immediate surroundings. Night spills over groin. Skull comes to life once again, but as aberrant form: a desiccated Medusa, snakes sprawling and a deathly stare. In the crook of the elbow a totemic column held tight against body, wrenched from temple as crude trophy.

Night slowly swallows world, spreading into the distance where thick black skies surround temple on the hill. Yet to be dulled by spilt night, temple is bathed in celestial light breaking through clouds. A picture of heavenly resistance.

Torrid, frantic night builds. World swallowed with fervour. Animated anew, a changed intensity: heady proximity.

In the dark of spilt night, Acéphale arises.

A new head! Atop neck as if always there. Acéphale bullheaded. Celestial adventure spills night once more. No coincidence that piercing blade spreads dark night once again, no coincidence that in dark night head changes. But this time no longer decapitation, rather the sorry stump crowned with a new adornment.

Acéphale charges frenetic, running through mythic worlds. A crazed motion with destructive wake. All left in pieces as Acéphale continues journey.

Charge continues through orgy of bodies convulsed in violence and contorted by pleasure. Perverse festivities surround as Acéphale emerges from night. Ecstatic bodies all around, but as the headless being spilt the dark, the convulsions too of a more radical form.

Woman merging with animal body, animal merging with man body, soldier forcing spear clean through ecstatic flesh, skies clouded by storm, black ash mixing with heavy night spilt from wound, Acéphale charges, through and out of bodies, blade held aloft in left hand, right arm clutching writhing mass of flesh, the convulsed gathered into a terrible embrace, skull over groin stares dead ahead, blank eyes, Acéphale glares, the same dead-eye focus, maelstrom.

Not one head, but two! As if frenetic charge multiplied growth. In wake of Acéphale, a desolate trail surrounded by an orgy of uncountable bodies. Flesh, limbs entwined. Murderous, perverse interactions. Human become animal. Animal taking

human form. Animal and human entwined as one another, together with each other.  
Troublesome hybrids.

Acéphale strides onwards. All the while surrounded by cracked rock, rent mountains, and the excess of the earth vomited into sky. Palls of dark smoke choke the air where once the night spilt from Acéphale occluded world. Snakes writhe and grape vines grow from lower limbs of Acéphale. Fertile ground for seed of debauched ideal. Still persisting with blade and flaming heart, hands now swapped: heart left, blade right. Heart held aloft, torrid incandescence of life held high above ecstasies of bodies. A guiding light of debauchery itself. The terrible symbol of life given to excess. Pure waste. The combustion of the force of life giving rise to ceaseless fire.

On Acéphale strides. On and on and on.

In wake, destruction, levelling and frenetic celebration. A mythical romp that disturbs and energises. Acéphale, striding like liberation. A bolt of terrible freedom in a world of simple stories.

Frenetic stride continues, debilitating in its intensity.

Night falls once again. Terrible occlusion. All black.

Heavy silence.

Long waiting.

Occlusion dissipates, Acéphale gone. On the ground, bullhead surrounded by flames burning bright without consuming. Between horns a human skull held aloft, empty eyes matched by bullhead full-frontal stare.

Acéphale, disappeared. Off into other realms.

Cycle begun again.

## *Fable*

They say a terrible lightning-strike once felled a mighty oak. Cast down in fury from heavens above, strike cut. Collapse.

They say a blade struck into a heart and spilt a night so dark all was occluded. Then a head removed, cut clean off under cover of night.

They say bodies contorted and convulsed into one another.

They say, after all this, there was a terrible arising. Death was corrupted and a headless being stood tall.

They say “Behold Acéphale!” rung out as imprecation.

They say necks craned back to follow Acéphale ascending on heavenly trajectory.

They say Acéphale roamed through mythic worlds; they say look to the skies: Acéphale still does.



# Bataille

## *A gathering*

The group assembles to beget Acéphale. A sacrificial offering to absent gods. The gathering not just for a sacrifice, but for an act in this world that causes Acéphale to rise up.

The sacrifice invokes the sacred. Each time re-igniting a clamour for the distant and mysterious. The sacrifice is each time a sacralised event, a crystalline, intense form of the sacred pulled into the duration of a terrestrial act. It is the celestial grabbed and pulled down to earth, as if two hands reach into the heavens and tear down a star. Incandescence scatters when heavens crash. An effervescent motion right at the heart of the event. The sacred re-invigorates the world with illuminations from other worlds.

Each time of the sacrifice is an each time of celestial re-entrenchment. A new, partial formation crystallised onto the surface of the earth. Prismatic: faceted, scattering light. Dispersed invocations work into the world in which the sacrifice occurs. The sacred each time re-invigorated, each time in the world of the profane. Unassimilable formations established by sacrifice gather, then scatter, distributed as heterogeneous components that disrupt the profane.

The group assembles to provoke scattering, an event that appears as a laceration of the world. A great rending strike that opens, and holds open. Laceration has a duration, from the provocation of the event until relenting to the profane. An intolerable and immense pressure returns stability.

Sacrifice, an each time re-invigoration of the passage of the sacred into the profane. Always a singular constitution. Regardless of that to which the offering is made, a passage is opened. Out of the world for a moment, the tableau of the offering is held. Separated from the trajectory of time, event is held, paused. Thus establishing



a relational map of striking blade, supine body, passage. All caught in laceration. All held without world momentarily.

Assembling around the site of a heavenly lightning-strike pulls in parts lingering from indefinite time past. A doubled overlay of without-world interactions fertilising one another. Hybrid worlds constituted.

The group assemble to take a life as an offering to empty skies. An excessive act performed speculatively under abandoned heavens. Sacrifice, always wasteful expenditure. Even under heavens of plenitude, offered in full appeasement or glorious tribute, sacrificial act is waste exulted. An offering from an event that is nothing but waste: given without purpose.

Sacrifice, the sacred re-invigorated. But more: begetting of Acéphale the aim of the assembly. The event of sacrifice pushed to its limit: a ritual staged to beget. Acéphale, sacrificial death recomposed. A new formation of waste embodied, expenditure reconfigured.

Sacrifice staged to engender the sacred scattering, but then death transposed to an embodied persistence retaining the qualities of the sacred whilst possessing a durability that sacrifice does not. The sacred must lack durability to have the power to disrupt. To scatter and to spill necessitates an impermanency. Actions of brevity and intensity participate in sacred formations. The incalculable does not last, and so ritual forms come to operate with a frequency that allows for interrupted, staccato moments of intense spilling. Periods of hedonistic excess are broken apart by the smooth formation of the profane. Sacrifice for an arising confounds. Changeable but durable form embodies some of the sporadic quality, but must adapt and recreate the infrequent, high intensity occurrence of the spilling of the sacred in another form. Acéphale, arising from this sacrifice confounded, gets trapped in the passage of

worlds. Right in the heart of the intersection is where the arising must take place. In doing so the intense, infrequent spilling is transmuted into the brevity and chaotic intensity of a figure capable of appearance whenever. An occasional, unanticipated interjection into a world. But an interjection that is all the more potent because not spilling from ritual, rather existing as a purely aleatoric form capable of autonomous decision. Pure caprice, released and let wander.

So it is that the sacrificial offering must die, causing the sacred and the occlusive night to spread into the world. But so it is also that death must be transposed from the intractable limit of a life to the capricious realm of a perverse creation. Wasteful excess is carried over a limit, causing an excess too in death that has no solution but to brim over, spilling back into the other side of the limit. Excess become totally intractable, an immeasurable scattering that testifies to the pure heterogeneity of sacralised formations.

All spills, impossible to follow.

Limits secede, death no longer clear. Thus it is that the sacred confounds and attains a new height of disruption in the offering made.

Blade pierces, kills.

Night spills from laceration. Swamps. A confounding excess encloses the world in which sacrifice takes place. Spread of night marks opening of the passage. A veiled interspersal of worlds. In night the heterogeneous predominates. Limits fall. Separate components collide. Into and out of one another passing occurs. One part and then another. Each and every time, at the same time, one part and then another. Occlusion.

Sacred opens as darkness, engulfs the profane, the calculable. Swallows all. Sacred exceeds, then accedes to height of power. Night swallows bodies too. Passage

opens, inverting, disordering, exposing bodies. Bodies outside, inside one another. Limits tumble. Down and down edges go, until nothing left but a comprehensive darkness and an intractable mass of engagement.

Such a soiling by the sacred and involuted bodies highlights the force of the heterogeneous. Swamping the profane world, the heterogeneous spreads as an excess. A disordered series of incoherent parts. Multiple excesses and intractable functions come from the heterogeneous freed into the world.

Heterogeneous components always exceed. Their brief, intense power focused on potency rather than duration. Intense form gives orgiastic quality. Heterogeneous doesn't come as regimented intervention, but rather explodes haphazardly with an irrepressible burst.

Such an excess provides a counterpoint to the homogeneous structures of the profane world. Heterogeneous parts render the incalculable and mysterious as momentary qualities within this world. The exposure marks out the limits of the profane by, in brief moments, showing what exceeds these limits. Not just the sacrificial engendering and the sacrificial experience, but the sacrificial offer as an extreme height of wasteful expenditure and a common assembly around excess. The sacrificial gains a strange kind of potency linked to such terrible excess.

The strike of the blade exposes the heterogeneous world, another world. Exposure, explicit acknowledgement. Outside of the ordered profane something else, opened to experience by sacrifice. Another order of experience demonstrative of another possible ordering of world.

Heterogeneous, not just an occurrence taking place within the profane world, not just composed from parts of the profane world. Components from elsewhere spill into the profane, another order of world engaging these components is thus exposed.

Excrecent parts break in and the whole structure loses stability. The problem, for the heterogeneous, is how to promote instability that endures between moments of exposure. Sacred needs extended duration for maximum force. Now the heavens are empty, the aleatoric needs a new capacity for intervention based on pure caprice. What was once the whim of the gods, captured in a great game, now lacks the durational persistence of witnesses from on high. Heavens now highly geometricised, even the monotheistic plays out a simple rhapsode of the one, whether withdrawn, absent or neither.

Imperatives met in begetting of Acéphale:

Sacrifice must go further.

Durational embodiment must be instigated.

Autonomous decision for the interruptive must be provided.

Heterogeneous components must break through.

An embodied roaming of heterogeneity must take place.

Discursive, profane world lacks basis for moral imperative. Needing an exigency from outside for a morality rationalised by an end in itself, the profane must instrumentalise the heterogeneous, sacred components latent within the world. The persistence of two world structures shows here. But the end-in-itself quality of the heterogeneous exerts an unacknowledged force right at the heart of the profane. Exposed in the sacrificial ceremony, the heterogeneous becomes apparent as a parallel world possibility unable to be clearly reckoned by the profane. Denigrations abound, but the profane cannot quite grasp. It cannot find end in itself, cannot get hold of excess or non-systematisable components.

Heterogeneous shows what's lost in and what exceeds the profane. Showing always the possibility of an exposure of an other world: roaming Acéphale freed from

the engendering act of sacrifice and the decision of the offering. Arising breaks the structure of apparent normalisation. The components that spill must be reckoned with in a different modality. But more than this, what becomes clear is that this differential mode is rather the strict possibility of an end to reckoning anything whatsoever. The obsession of the homogeneous world with the calculable and the productive leads to a continuous deferral of end: this does this does this. Ceaseless, it goes on. The sacrificial act provides a severe response to this endless counting. The puncture of the blade cuts short the calculative operation, leaving only an unsurpassable limit. Darkness spills as prohibition against counting. The heterogeneous refuses productive investment for end itself. End, all end and nothing more.

Profane cannot tally waste. Thus the knowledge of the profane hits a limit when encountering the sacred and its spilt content. The dark night pouring from the sacrificial laceration occludes and presses out the fields of homogeneous calculation. A void of calculative reason is left, littered with excrescent parts. A new engagement necessary. A new mode of grasping for the night of nonknowledge.

Darkness swamps fully, occludes all.

Great, tumultuous inversions send structures scattering. Edifice broken apart and left in ruins.

Ecstasy abounds.

Bodies contorted.

Senses choked, overwhelmed.

Night necessitates other modes of engagement. Occluding the world, night engages bodies too. Great mutuality of parts. Bodies and thought convulsed, disengaged from profane calculation.

Night exceeds. Thought grapples differently. Regimes shift. The calculable relents. Excess predominates.

In night involuted existence abates. No longer the clarity of a turned-in-upon and isolated measurement, but rather a tremendous unfurling. A motion like the unclenching of a fist, setting open closed-up parts into an encompassing darkness. The excrescent and incommensurable now free to mix. Strange interspersals as parts scatter amongst one another. Oppositional structures no longer pertain between the homogeneous and the heterogeneous. No more excess to be reckoned up and restrained. A distinct change of terms: excess become common principle. An incalculable world set forth in the spilt night of nonknowledge.

Awash over all.

Great clamour of ecstasy.

Laughter. Tears.

Night, unknown quality, provokes responses of astonishment, stupefaction, then relinquishment. Obfuscation of all.

Thick in the mouth, night chokes words and protects silence. Edges occluded. Discursive falters then loses contact. Only possible response: to laugh and to cry.

Thought hits a limit inside night. Lost, without coherent object. An involuted thinking becomes common and thought grasps clumsily at itself.

Stability, common presupposition, belief: all falter in spread of night. The common become baffling. The simple act become profound.

Overwhelmed by laughter provoked by the unknown, those swallowed in night lose the coherent anchor of the known, abandoned to the unknown quality of the

occlusive spill in a ceaseless submission. Ecstatic contortions not always willed, but come as impulsive responses to the unknown.

Night spills, then swallows. In doing so night lays bare. Common span of incoherence overwhelms stability of objects. Things waver, become hesitant. In the presence of the unknown, nothing to do but laugh.

A great belly laugh for the incomprehensible. The more excessive, the more vigorous the laugh. Laughter at its height disappropriates, takes over the whole body. The known disappears and laughter expands to fill the gap. Apprehensive silence allayed by great reams of laughter swelling up and spreading.

Correspondences awry. Solidity dispossessed. In front of disappearing objects laughter is effulgent. A raucous filling for a tentative and disarming experience.

Night spills and laughter spreads. The impression given of a co-extensivity of the two, like laughter spills out the wound itself. Laughter comes as response with strange immediacy, caught right up in the spilling night itself. Laughter builds in intensity as darkness grows deeper. Heaviness of night causes laughter to be more virulent.

Laugh, mode of thinking night. Clear light of day disappears and the reassured relations of the bright world dissolve. New engagements command a new regime of thought. Laughter comes to fill the void. What was once known clearly loses focus, dissipates as laugh consumes. Simple correspondences, presuppositions, reassured connections, all slip in dark night as laughter takes over and re-arranges the game.

World no longer a reserve of known and assessable material. Rather laughing response throws. Laughter embraces night of unknown and in overwhelming contortions the body is doubled up and tipped over into another world. All lost in laughter for an instant. Momentary, always momentary. But until night abates, ages

pass in the single convulsive gesture of a laugh. No longer steady time, laugh distends counts and the punctual instant swells to fill the drawn out passage.

Laughter overtakes established correspondence, rendering the thinking of night as play. An extended game accompanied by great peals of laughter.

In this instant, lasting and drawn out, the end point of daylight knowledge is completely severed. A durational moment appears, spanning time without a clear finality: it goes on and on and on. Laughter lasts as long as it lasts. Whilst body convulsed, instant held. Aim lost. Process predominates.

To experience instants held in abeyance laughter must persist, grasping in its moment the game unfolding. Dark night needs play of laughter as a process undergone. Isolated, drawn out instants provide moments of separation from determined ends. A causal interruption, the instant provides the engagement of laughter with sovereign moments. Liberated from the clear light of day, moments are held open for experience.

Nonknowledge is revealed through the dark night and cacophonies of laughter as another world. A world in excess of the world of knowledge. Yet a world related, a persistence alongside. Impossibility is drawn into proximity through the sacrificial act, becoming momentarily a part of the world of knowledge through occlusion. A dark spot over the sun. Nonknowledge can do nothing but brim over during this invocation, spilling into the daylight world and covering up correspondent parts that function as ordinal points of a knowable world.

All spills under a troubling sky, an empty arborescence. The possible and the impossible held together in the world. Night spills and the world is pushed to the end of the possible. Life glares as the clear light of day, illuminating discursive correspondences and solid objects, whilst death obfuscates all with a cloudy negativity. Pressing right up against declarations of clarity, the impossible begins by



partially obfuscating and indetermining clear edges. The clarity of possibility cedes to the pressure of the impossible. An active unworking of the world. Cataract.

The pressing that forces one world in and through the other appears too in the crackle of connection as lightning strikes and bridges the celestial and the terrestrial. A proximity of disparate parts and testament to fundamental relation. The celestial asserts through terror, through wonder, with back arched and eyes transfixed. Depths draw in gazes, demand bodily contortions that destabilise vertical posture.

The celestial impinges upon the terrestrial with a magical quality. Through strike an indeterminate character is given to the once precise terrestrial limits of the possible and impossible. The celestial itself has an occlusive quality that disorganises the terrestrial distributions of possibility. Lightning strikes and the impossible is energised, impinges then spreads. Sacrificial spilling, only one disruptive form amongst others.

Standing under the immense span of the celestial, man gazes. A great ambiguity overhead, whilst down below the possible measures out correlative structures of the good. Clarity pertains to the legible, whilst occlusive darkness renders the clear illegible and thus draws accusations of evil. The possible and impossible clash above. A war of the gods above shows the forces of absolutes in a continuous conquest. Agape below, mouths stutter, failing to speak the terms of the engagement.

The battle rages. In turn the good triumphs. Perfection of gods renders the possible absolute and banishes the impossible to the depths of hell where dark occlusion abounds. But this is only one such battle, through the immensity of the heavens the scene of contest is revisited time and again. All along the terrestrial balance is maintained in the light of day and the promise of a sunrise tomorrow. At times, above, the occlusive impossible abounds. The perfection of the absolute

terrorises and exceeds the comprehension of the possible. Lost in starry skies is the clarity of a workable relation where the impossible is bounded by daylight possibility and left to spill in regulated moments.

A terrestrial confoundment breaks this ordained relation. The sacred pulls the impossible further into the possible and destabilises the structural organisation. The sacrifice, even offered under empty skies where the contest has perhaps finally abated, pulls the impossible in further. Spilt night occludes. The ecstasy that abounds in night comes as a response to the intoxicating force of the impossible.

Salvation mediates. The work of a temperate god. The sacrifice pulls in the impossible as an instability. Salvation expiates for sacrifice. The impossible spilling modulates into a commandment for a means to something else: a saviour, a release from tyranny of the possible-impossible ambiguity reigning on high. Salvation thus corrupts sacrifice by attempting to mediate and control the impossible spill from within the world of the possible. The impossible rendered a calculable and operative spilling: caught up in an aim and set to work. This is precisely why begetting must be part of the sacrifice. Begetting refuses the work of salvation, giving embodiment to the impossible. A duration assured. Embodied in begetting is transgression in perpetuity: capricious and intense.

In darkness demands made of the world. Demands made even whilst mouths choked with thick night. Demands made even whilst eyes clouded by occlusive darkness and blurred by streams of tears. Demands made even whilst ears overwhelmed by dense silence and bursting cacophonies of laughter. Darkness spreads and demands made must be met with methods anew.

Outside the clear world of day, other approaches begin to proliferate. The laugh spreading with greater intensity and frequency, eyes embracing hesitant edges, ears drowning joyfully in the fury of laughter overtaking silence.

Groping around the world of darkness fixes attention tightly. Foregrounded are the process of finding and the experience undergone. Time waits in the dark, eager to start counting once again, but the fixation of the spilt night restrains and draws out a duration of waiting.

In dark night bodies flail. Twisting, touching, in contortion bodies exceed limits. Touch dissolves into mutual participation. Laughter ejects from mouths agape, filling ears with sonorous mass punctuating thick silence. Laughter, touch, all ecstatic contortion abrades edges. Heavy friction of night wears down tired limits. Well-worn components break down through abrasive action, leaving newly freed connections that lubricate channels previously seized.

Friction overlaid with angelic touch of light hands. Fast, nimble work of fingers trail scatterings of light through heavy night. Highlighted and retained, momentary passages of hand's motion linger whilst gestures of the angelic hands continue to unfold. A tightly clenched fist, caught as tensing of muscle that forces and holds a furious closure. Metacarpal lump subtended by tensed fingers. All clammed up. A gentle caress by angelic finger opens. Touch sets release. Fingers relax, palm exposed. From the centre of the fist an obdurate thing freed. Clenched tight, now set loose. Released, timidly, into the night. What was let go gets lost. Fully occluded in dark. Set free from vision. Open palm remains, soft skin invites night's offering. Graced, briefly, with the trace of an angelic finger. A second returning caress drawn across the palm before trailing off into night. Scattered in its wake, a trail of light.

As fist, so body. Light touch unfurls, centre exposed to night: open and at risk.

Angelic touch dances whilst heavy night continues abrasion. Parallel operations work upon limits. At play, undoing, re-doing, complementing one another's work.

Opened body unclenched. Battered and stroked. Aggressively re-worked and coaxed into new configurations. Fist-unity of body enclosed, undone. Free for exposure, free for touch. A grab, holding, able to interlock. Fingers open, receptive. Hand grabs and guides onwards. Touch interlocks and at point of exposure bodies dissolve one into another. Dissolution, not just heavy abrasion but simply the lightness of an angelic touch exposing the palm and freeing the fingers for a receptive hold.

Touch dissolves. Hands enfold. A mutual exposure.

Separation thus allayed, clenched-fist unity of body exposed as terrible fiction. A hollow, craven tension that locks upon itself. Not assurance of unity, but reassurance of in exposure. Exposure's risk subdued through clenching.

In night, ecstatic contortions find two movements: communicative opening, dissolution of individual. Both linked to thick occlusion of spilling; both caught and articulated around unity: the fictive unity of the clenched fist and the reaching-for unity of communication. The fist must unfurl in order to open to the uniting force of dissolutive touch. The closed-in upon opens, touch exposes and communication opens as possibility. Co-extensivity of two motions found through ecstatic contortions as possibility of night. Two motions finding common form, a heightened tension in darkness articulating ecstasy in a form taking on high relief. The diaphanous illumination of angelic touch set against heavy silence and aggressive abrasion. Night constitutes a particularly febrile ecstasy precisely because of its origination and its intense formation of all-over occlusion. A dissolutive and communicative progenitor

*par excellence*. Ecstasy abounds as plenitude when laughter fills mouth, when night clogs ears, when eyes stream.

Discursivity vacillates as night fills cavities. A world well-composed is overwhelmed. Structural correspondences shift or are covered over. Bits and pieces left isolated, waiting for reconnection in new formations.

Death rends.

Night occludes.

Eroticism overpowers.

All such events engender discursive collapses.

Beings dissolve into world. Bodies dissolve into one another. World dissolves into night. Repeated dissolutions collapse connections and so goes the composition of the world.

All put at risk.

Ecstasy's gambit risks the whole world. Timorous unfurling is a response to the terror of exposure. The risk of coming fully undone haunts. All risk waged on the grasp catching. The unclenched fist apprehends the grasp to come as a response to a generous opening. A gamble without guarantee however. The angelic touch encourages the tight-clenched fist to risk the world closed within does not promise a return with the grace of its brushing contact. Teased open, fist unfurls, but light touch comes with no promises. The most confident unfurling lacks concrete assertions. The angelic is not a work of benevolence, but only an encouragement to risk. From angelic touch, gambit and play.

Unfurled, abraded. Clenched-up opens to the play of the world. All thus gambled. Wagered without pay-out, without profiteering. Gambled for the sake of the

gambit, alone the play of caprice and the possibility of reciprocity that is not a profit or a means of re-investment.

The two movements in night are divorced from the correspondence of the closed-fist world. The clenched-up unity that recedes from exposure to the world aligns carefully with a mechanism of reciprocal clenching, drawing out a whole series of tight-fist models. Tightly linked to a clenched exchange, enclosures make risks calculated on gains keyed to the structural correspondences of the clenched fist. A structure is thus formed from enclosures that allay the capricious for a measured re-investment.

All such possibilities lose coherence in spilt night. The dance of the angelic touch illuminates, opens then chains together. Openings are linked through the play of light that lingers as the finger sweeps along chains of enclosures.

Opening disorganises closed-fist economies, one then another are exposed without clear relational structure. The whole lot no longer points in any clear direction, rather investments spill out into the world without any guarantee of return or of reciprocal grasp.

A glorious opening of the hand. Unfurling, beatific because gambled. At risk, playful and capricious. Opened to the world. Exposed, spread apart. Free to play. Energy liberated. Set loose, lost in the world. Opening detaches for energetic expenditure.

Night spills as pure waste, a glorious expenditure of energy itself. In night, spasmodic ecstasy exhausts body without purpose. Convulsions consume energy for sole operation of nervous expenditure. Communication, glorious dilapidation. Dissolving, energy relaxes into world, released from the intensive strain of enclosure.

Multiple, co-extensive layerings of expenditure released and left to play following the life given in sacrifice. All exceeding the simple structure of re-investment. Life not given for provocation of expenditure, rather life given spills night. Energy used without production, given over to gambit and spent in playful engagement.

Expenditures in night occur in alien forms for the closed-up individual. Whole series of wasteful exchanges circulate around resolute enclosure until the angelic touch or the heavy abrasion releases tension of clenched fingers, liberating what was held within to the exigency of wastefulness. Whole regimes of productive expenditure collapse with this opening. The isolable unit unfurls as a gambit and no longer can re-investment function coherently. All operative components of a general equivalency waver when clenched enclosure slackens. What's released from inside is really nothing at all. Rather the energy given over to unfurling, just an infinitesimal amount, exposes. Release, simply an exposition. A soft palm opened to the abrasions of the world, opened to the glory of the communicative, dissolutive touch. General equivalence tumbles as calculation abates. Touch disrupts and releases bodies, one unto another. The most basic measure collapses the moment flesh meets flesh.

Glory carries great fragility. The fragility of flesh, the fragility of a life. Everything at risk in glorious expenditure. At risk, thus communicative possibility and great liberation of unfolding.

Risk's necessity is without project and thus does not construe the world at play as a generative investment. Risk thus taken not for the terms of the fragile exchange, but rather as an expenditure as glorious waste that gambles. A risk that opens and awaits possibility beyond the expenditure of a calculable sum. All at stake in play. All to the point of a maximal unfurling without reciprocity: the hand that opens and folds

back upon itself until knotted the wrong way around. Fingers and thumb meeting the wrist on opposite sides, wide open and flailing wildly. A complete waste, open and awaiting.

All at risk: individual integrity lost, future gambled. The whole lot wagered.

No more investment, no more beatific promise. Under empty skies a sacrifice offered without possibility of appeasement. No hallowed end. Vacant heavens cannot comprehend expiation. Expenditures for the gods once present lose force. Without recipient, heavenly expenditures accrued as so much waste. Investment for the future, a useful cause energetically pursued, holds open the yet to come as possibility. Strike of the blade throws investment into stark relief, collapsing a whole moral mechanism predicated upon productive expenditure and the clenched-up individual. All predications fail.

Communication throws outside, individual unfurls. Structures of investiture collapse and the preponderance of the future as a calculative moral value loses clarity. Glorious expenditure renders problems right at the heart of the calculative edifice, all structured around productive re-investment. The spectacle of the sacrifice, the arising of Acéphale and bodies ecstatically intermingled appropriate and disrupt, leaving the mechanism of investment hopelessly flailing after undergoing a re-working that wastes.

Waste confounds, and in this process clarifies structural determinants of the systems of investiture. The laceration of being, whether communicative, through the strike of the blade, or the grace of the angelic touch, releases great torrents of problems into the world. Released as gambit, then left to play. Uncompromising sets of inassimilable lumps roam and disrupt.



All lacerations risk. All are great gambles on the potency of spilling. Lacerations communicate. Lacerations unfurl.

In night lacerations are shared. Ecstasy engages one then another, into one another. Fragility of communicative exposure, dissolution of clenched-up individual, always found in the movements between one and another. Spill of night always shared, always exposed between. Fragility comes not only from the risk of all, but also the concomitant risk of reciprocal engagement. Fragility always shared outside, exposed to play and the field of the gamble. Fragility of glorious expenditure can be found suspended somewhere between the touch of the two or more. The dissolutive, communicative touch always apportioned: spread between when ecstasy abounds.

Opened to the world one way or another, unfolding awaits indeterminate contact. Exposure to night, the unknown and illimitable. An exposure to world occluded defeats experience. No regimes or measures can calculate modes for addressing night. Once unfurled, experience hesitates. Surety bereft, discursivity drifts.

Into this opening, a great spilling. A shared spilling as energy and motion are set loose into already spilt night. In excess of calculation, the ecstasy that grips commits to expenditure without waiting for confirmation. Night grabs, opens and draws out. The spill that comes from the sacrificial laceration washes over all, and in that instant of occlusion exposure takes over. Being relents. Striking daylight limit, world of night takes on appearance of celestial. A measureless, deep dark over the terrestrial. Great exteriority of the heavens collapsed to familiarity. Collapsed and devoid of the infinite quality of the gods above. Emptied out, the unknown left over.

Ecstasy throws against the great spill, anticipating a resistance that doesn't come. Throw against becomes a stumble into relinquishment and deeper loss.

Abandonment to night leaves limits in its wake. No more delineation, no more resistance. A contorted body swallowed up.

Laughing being reaches into the dark. An unfurled, exposed existence lacerated by night as if by blade. Laughter erupts, spilling from body like night from wound. A reach into the unknown, grasping without clear object. Great ripostes of laughter draw ever deeper into night. Laughing response complicit in action of loss and predominance of unknown. With each motion ever-deeper laughter grips more tightly, night becomes heavier. The reach forwards unfurls being more and more. Each motion causing a new exposure, pulling open and continuing to expose what was clenched tight. The release accompanies night's swallow. Leaving the unknown as reached-for exteriority. Communication attempted through laughter, through tears or contortions. Energy thrown, committed to spill and seeking communicative capacity in dark night.

Being at risk. Tenebrous reach exposes. Each time gambling more. But each time too opening further. Engaging with night more fully until a complete commitment given. Much as imprecations to the skies wagered on answers to come, the unknown supplants the infinite as the void of the skies collapses to the ground. Experience given over to night, left to grapple with the occluded. Cascades of inversions result. Limits tumble, unknown presses against and spills back through the world. The profane, briefly washed over with a sacred spill, is recovered into darkness, providing illegible components for the dark night. The sacred modulates too, losing its celestial preference and targeted instead towards the short-circuit of the arising Acéphale. All pulled in and re-composed.

A being unfolds, extends, then dissolves partially in spilt night. Each event must be an each and every time. An always singular occurrence without plan or model.

Project recuperates the profane, carefully calculating and modelling events. The irascible is drawn back into the structures from which it initially escapes. Night must exceed all, washing over and denying the calculative any bearing whatsoever. Communication and dissolution must get lost in night, evade the grasp of calculative strategies and remain always a singular and unrepeatable event: an each time exposure.

In moments when the calculative is stopped short, inner experience pursues its arduous path. Set free unto night without burden of project. In ecstasy a great loss of profane thought and structured knowledge. Such occlusions open other realms. Whilst night endures, nonknowledge intervenes as ambition of ecstasy's engagement with the unknown. Discordant forms provide responses to the world, forms usually reserved for the minor eruptions of excess: laughter, tears, eroticism.

Accompaniment of night with duration unknown. Excess only extends as far as night continues. As darkness clears effusions calm. Bodies stand back up, arms either side, legs planted, torsos still. Occasional convulsions twitch through, brief spasms hold onto remnants of the once-swamping night, easing off as spilt night disperses into clear night of the forest.

Contortions cease, dissolutive touch abates, communicative risk is allayed, clear night opens world of forms before the group, the troubling form of head cleaved from body dominates the clearing, around the terrible scene clear night waits, all knots of spilt night dissipated, a waiting with clarity of time measured by ceaseless, imagined click, seconds counted, one then another, on and on.

### *Arisen*

Twitch of corpse hits group like a bullet, jarring the world, forcing wide open. Incertitude of death given stark and apparent form as a small and intense gesture

crushes the surety of its passing. Death interrupted. Incompleted as if sent back from another world.

The bonds of the sacrificial gesture undone. Empty heavens known prior, thus no surprise when sacrifice remains without acknowledgement. No signs from the gods, rather in the sacrificial moment the great void of the heavens collapsed to the earth. Futility of the offering rendered with a terrible clarity as heavens displaced through collapse. Offering becomes pure waste. But then, after collapse of heavens, Acéphale arises and the whole economy of sacrifice is completely disorganised.

Mechanism of death broken. It only goes so far until Acéphale gets up and the whole process is inverted. Arising, Acéphale stands amidst a great confusion as moments of life and death turn upon themselves, lost.

Sacrifice no longer produces offering. Rather the sacrifice collapses the heavens towards which it is made whilst death is corrupted the moment Acéphale arises. All productive channels lost in night. Occlusion refigures and death corrupted takes the form of a headless being. Acéphale arising functions as a structural block, a principle of active disorganisation that begins by breaking the mechanism of death. All waste, all excess expenditure comes to a head in Acéphale. Standing as a figure of flayed gods and pure excess, Acéphale cannot take on the role of production precisely because everything is wasted. All energy dissipated, as if shot out the top of the body with such force the head came off.

Sacrifice begets Acéphale, but not as object. Rather the frenetic charge of Acéphale can only be maintained briefly, leading to an investiture in waste. All excess given out.

Only an end. Set free to roam furiously. Set free to disorganise. Acéphale, not just excess, but destructive creation. Acéphale disorganises: roaming, spreading

excess and destabilising formations. Once arisen, the profane and the sacred worlds are challenged. Limits broken through the pull of Acéphale that tears down and re-composes.

Instability disrupts salvation. The expiatory abandoned under empty skies. Disorganising Acéphale arisen again refuses the possibility of investment. Only waste, thus no means for release. Only a more complete commitment to excess, nothing held in reserve, nothing held for the future that refuses to gamble. Acéphale the dogged inassurance of disorganisation. Marching, undoing. Salvation stopped dead. Life lost under killing strike. The offering taken, but divested of possible use and standing as only an end in itself: Acéphale arising.

Risen, from horizontal corpse to vertical god. The same motion of the animal and the man. Two components meet in Acéphale, man and animal combine into headless figure. Disorganisational quality comes from just such confusions: the living and the dead, the man and the animal. Hybrid forms confused unstructure worlds.

Acéphale does not tip or stumble. Arising mimics animal getting up, rearing onto hind legs before discovering bipedal balance in graceful vertical. Straight up, steady and foreboding. A cosmic realignment from the flat corpse sprawled to the heavens-bound standing of the newly-risen figure. No longer need to contort whole body to gaze towards the celestial, rolling over supine to view above, rather a simple craning of the neck with feet firmly planted. Wonderment much easier when bodily motions agreeable.

Animal horizontality loses immanent correspondence when arising to the vertical and gazing at the transcendent. A body realigns and rethinks. Animal-dead Acéphale spills night. Effusion grips, destabilising the vertical organisations of the sacrificial group. As ecstasy contorts and unfurls, horizontal components break

through, movements lose specific vertical form and find corresponding alignments along the horizontal. Animal qualities spread with night, partially disorganising the rigid verticality of the profane world. Axial inversions disorganise: tipping, tumbling, spreading. Limits slip as axes move from the interference of night. Unfurling involves partial shifts of alignment, as the clenched-tight passes through transitions provoked by horizontal imperatives.

The sacrificial victim's horizontal perishing becomes a more profound death at the moment Acéphale stands. In this moment that modulates death, arising defers the very issue and leaves the question unanswered.

The victim opens the passage for the strike. Supine posture a conditional invitation. Opened up to the blade as offering to be taken.

Strike meets flesh in the horizontal. Spilling spreads without clear axis of orientation. Acéphale arises in the vertical. Conjoined in this transition is the confusion at the centre of Acéphale. The sacred and profane clashing appears as one more disorganisational quality. The profane is appropriative: calculating and assimilating. The sacred is excremental: an exposition of waste, enmeshed with the excesses of profane production, the unwelcome and transgressive. Appropriative entrance and excremental exit are organised along a plane that keeps operations apart. In this way a clear causal function is set out and ordained by the profane world, a logical set of operations moving from appropriation to excretion. Problems arise when the function is reversed, the two ends are connected up into a circular form, or a blockage arises. Under empty skies appropriation continues but nothing is released, thus the profane causes its own block by refusing the sacred functions that produce the transgressive components of the world. The profane can't cope with the intractable mess that results.

Over-calculative, aggressive appropriation has no release and so the furious consumption and storage of energy eventually knots within the structure and the whole thing builds an enormous pressure.

A strike of the blade releases. So too buccal eruptions.

System reconfigured finds appropriative orifices spouting. Uncontrollable sputters vomit laughter and excremental wastes back into the world. Such contortions or inversions of planar distribution parallel the formations found in the tumbling of axial alignments as Acéphale arises. All releases reconfigure. Profane structure challenged then undone. Alternatively, the profane erupts the only way it knows how, a great mobilisation of productive re-investment freed in the machinery of war.

The sacred spilling under empty skies must crash the heavens to the earth in order to re-invigorate the excremental. New-found powers when liberated from heavenly influence. Sacrificed forms set free. The heavens drop, profane world occluded. Sheer force of descent disorganises all.

Then Acéphale gets up and the problems of circularity and reversal of the planar system find resolve in the confusion of the arising. Disorganised formation, Acéphale unworks the profane world. Taking on a more stable durational form than the spilt night, Acéphale occludes further the predominance of the profane. System reversed. Excremental become prime operative. Spilling out waste, feeding back into the appropriative mechanism a sheer nonsense that provokes nothing but laughter. Then decoupling the appropriative function and leaving it as curious redundancy.

Such planar operations found in the mouth and the anus. A consistency across animal and man postures through which Acéphale moves. Clear organisation functional until the head cut off, only the excremental function left intact, exposed all the more clearly in the intestinal tract made visible. In the end Acéphale capable only

of spilling heterogeneous matter. All must come from the profane transgressed: the occlusion of spilt night. All comes in sacrifice from profane lacerating itself. Pure abstraction of killing blade, precisely modelled cut, pierces flesh. In this profane meeting of body and abstraction the sacred spills and contests the world.

The excremental ordering of sacrifice renders death troubling because life given for no means. Life given only to give: end. A pure act of beauty, a terrible act of transgression.

Either plane leaves seeing horizontal. Tied strictly to the world and only through contortions able to apprehend the celestial above. Solar empowers, draws up. Vertical organisations separate extent of body from earth, only light contact of soles of feet remain whilst body soars upwards: magnetised and energised by the sun.

Each body up. Straight. Tall. Divided. One from another distinguished by aerial space. Rigidities distinct, ordained from on high. Seeing stuck tight to horizontal, resistance to vertical ordering from on high. Great conflict at the heart of man. Vision meets earthly material when let rest. Profane draws up to the sun, delighting in skies emptied of gods now no longer occluding solar energy. Upwards pull desirous of new seeing without craned neck. If only eye for vertical seeing! Sprouted from top of head to grasp the solar more completely. Radiant energy and blinding light. But the head cut off. All vision ceases.

Stood up without head. Excremental order arising to vertical potency. Solid standing makes arising unquestionable. An act of habitual confidence. Life ordered by the celestial, pulled up to feet by the enticing force of skies above. But heavens empty, allure immediately tempered by absence.

Still standing below skies, but modified: a standing resilient. From out of the clash of heavens collapsing to earth, from out of the swamping of the sacred, Acéphale



stands and maintains stance through confusion, resistant to the contradictory imperatives spread around. All confusions gathered up, but at centre Acéphale monumental and unmoving. No problem more forceful than standing up after blade pierces and head cut off. Great imperative forces clash, Acéphale stands. This is how it can be said that he is made of innocence and crime. The supine body waiting, the blade strike begetting. Knots abound in Acéphale, giving the arising and the onward march yet to come the full force of contradiction. Confounding and disorganising, Acéphale arises and operates precisely as disorganisation. A force of disruption set free for capricious wander. A force that troubles structures.

The sacrificial motive is revealed here. Beyond the sacred re-invigorated, beyond the simple contestation of the profane with a transgressive act, the sacrifice opens the world to the begetting of a disorganising force that possesses autonomy. A begetting through death without indebtedness. An earth-bound miraculous conception only possible once the heavens have collapsed. Without pre-ordination, commanding no following, only spreading a vortex of disorganisation through worlds presumed composed.

All contradictions found in conflation of bodily composition of Acéphale: vertical stance with head missing, heart and blade held apart, intestines and celestial appendages locked on torso. Acéphale composed from parts in opposition. Features held tight, despite repulsions, in body that gets up and roams. No wonder the disorganising potency. A knife-like incision into worlds that carries through great knots of confusion. Despite clean-edged incisions such lacerations can't be easily closed. Always remnants disrupting, blocking. Much as spilt night from wound finally leaves Acéphale as remnant, wander of Acéphale leaves disruptive remnants too. Heterogeneous parts unleashed, the sacred-excremental troubles the appropriative

enclosures of the profane, stopping easy proliferation. Calculation encounters values unknown and waste unthinkable.

### *Celestial*

Up, up into heavens Acéphale goes. Ever skyward ascent from earth to mythic skies. Heavens rent, then swallowed whole. Acéphale ascends, then disappears into heavenly abyss. Soon return the placid night skies, littered with celestial bodies: calm vision of furious energy.

Arising transfigured, doubled up. Once from blade-strike death to magisterial standing, twice from the possessive gripping of the profane to celestial liberty. Pull of gravity's miserly cant abandoned for the aerated abyss of heavens. Free roaming for capricious embodiment.

Necks crane to follow rising trajectory, one more contortion of body measured out in relation to Acéphale. Muscles pull taut as ascent increases in height, anatomical limits block clear tracing of motion. If only eye for vertical seeing! Clear sight of celestial without contortion, the intimate possibility of a new relation.

Acéphale arisen from assertion of continuity. Death, dispelling the discontinuous, corrupted in arising. A strange compound stands, the continuous arisen into discontinuity. A clashed form, confused and headless. Absolutely out of place in the terrestrial, Acéphale has no choice but to escape the pull of the profane. Driven by a strange injunction, trajectory of escape must lead to heavenly abyss. The emptied skies above offering the respite of the blank infinite, a celestial continuity. Instability of Acéphale after arising, composed and recomposed body, the continuous holding forth as embodied discontinuity, necessitate arising. Instability finds a home in the celestial realm of pure caprice: the ungoverned continuity.

Arising to the celestial traces a path from the geometric regularity of the profane to the chaos of abyss. A motion of ascent from the homogeneous predominant to the permissive liberty of a heterogeneous expanse. Illimitable because immeasurable, expanse of heavens sets Acéphale free to indulge the possible without measure.

Heterogeneity embraces the chaos of continuity clashed with ever-recomposing body, a body at odds with its discontinuous allegiance. Upwards arising describes movement from the base heterogeneity of sullied ground, where once the big toe of sacrificial offering sunk into the muddied clearing, to the imperative heterogeneity of heavenly height. Up to the world of godly caprice, Acéphale becomes chaotic rupture embodied: separate, on high.

Only in ascent does Acéphale escape the sanctions of the profane, only through sacred permissiveness does Acéphale gain the capacity to ascend. Heavenly abyss offers infinite expanse for traversal of Acéphale as liberated energy. An illimitable explosion of the heterogeneous.

Acéphale ascends, escaping into the nothingness of sovereign indecision. Base heterogeneity become imperative. Acéphale sits on the cusp of the nothing, the cusp of a dissolution into the bleaching opacity of myth. Roaming around the brilliant edge of the nothing, ascent of Acéphale never carries to a glorious enough height to escape the final dissolution. Always caught between the clamour of terrestrial implorations offered up, and the glorious nothingness of sovereign purity. A wavering, unstable form, Acéphale roams relentless celestial trajectory. A desperate clamour to escape a crash back down to earth or a disappearance into the pure nothing, the blank infinite of celestial abyss.

## *Myth worlds*

Relentless wander of Acéphale finds its motive in the twin injunctions of a fall or a dissipation. Worlds of myth offer a home for Acéphale, trapped somewhere between the terrestrial fall and the heights of a celestial dissipation. A capricious world for a capricious figure.

Acéphale, arising to worlds of myth pulls craned-neck attention of group up into in the myth-world canopy stretched above. Celestial ascent thus one more statement of the persistence of myth, even in its dissimulated state of absence. Acéphale thus not only an arising into a world convinced by the myth of the absence of myth, but an arising that pulls the dispelling process deep into the world of myth itself. Acéphale arising after killing strike is the corruption of the myth of the absence of myth. Inscribed in a corrupted form into a mythic register, Acéphale becomes an agent of the dissolution of myth's transparency, an explosive stating of myth's continued persistence. Acéphale recomposing is pallor become opaque, a progressive washing out of transparency.

Second arising, from terrestrial to celestial, carries a new force: the trajectory of Acéphale roams through worlds indifferent to the witnessing or participation of an intervening figure. Acéphale thus discovers rather than originates myth worlds. Ascent to heavens finds nothing but the chaotic proliferation of myth in a world long freed from the dominion of one divining force. Myth worlds and heavens returned to the chaos of heterogeneity, the plural fracture of interplay in the heavenly sphere. Acéphale can only ascend to skies emptied of the geometric ordination of monotheistic persistence. A shattered and fragmented heavens needed for mythic roaming of Acéphale, a space open and free for the ascension of a gift bequeathed from earth to

the heavens. A terrestrial son offered to the mythic gods, bizarre inversion of a gesture long past. Potlatch economy for those without infinite reserves, the divine outdone.

Acéphale ascends to mythic skies. With the liberty of an infinite abyss, Acéphale runs amok. Marching through scenes of myth worlds, Acéphale interferes as a corrupted myth figure. Participating with an appropriated propriety, taking on forms, composing and recomposing both body and worlds around. Acéphale marches through all as tool of appropriation, as revitalisation, as a disorganising inquest from the terrestrial. Spreading as contagion through myth worlds, Acéphale seeds chaotic fragments into stories long established, refutes propriety, steals, disrupts. With such chaotic interventions myth shatters, further and further disrupted and distended until its elasticity exhausted, its internal tension flailing from torsional excess unable to be contained.

Before chaotic intervention, Acéphale stops to take rest, sitting atop volcanic mouth dribbling brimstone flow deep into valley below. Ash clouds darken skies whilst Acéphale sits resolute and unmoving. Groin-skull stares out. A hollow, haunting glare. Blade, extended to become sword, dropped to the ground and gripped either end by bulbous feet. Flaming heart clenched tight between both hands, held in close proximity to the chest. Bizarre inversion of inside and out. “*Le glaive, c’est la passerelle*” echoes around the valley below. Words resound, masking source through multiple proliferations, appearing as if bellowed from the skies themselves.

Up, Acéphale rises, lifting whole body onto right leg, balancing on plateau sat upon just moments before. Precarious balance as left leg tips to one side, floating to the skies with foot lost amongst the clouds. Body held tilted in posture commanding to be beheld: arms spread wide, heart and blade tension maintained at extremities of reach. Headless being now lofted high above valleys knotted as so many threads

below. Body rigid despite contortion of posture. Acéphale raised up on high, calm and magisterial.

Off! Off into skies. Acéphale in flight, just one more arcing trajectory. Led into abyss by heart and blade held aloft, instrumental clashing piercing through skies. Collision of continuous and discontinuous existences leads the way. Corruption of arising carried through into transit of myth worlds, force of clashing sears a path through ash-dark skies. Flight carries Acéphale on escape trajectory once more. Too unstable to remain dormant, unable through corrupted form to occupy any one world for a duration, Acéphale responds to the mute imperative commanding continuous motion. On and on and on Acéphale must roam. A perverse nomadic obligation. Each time interference dispossesses, a conflict of Acéphale and mythic scenes causes formal contortions, distensions, appropriations, additions or sympathetic outcroppings.

Roaming continues across stormy seas. Waves rage whilst Acéphale marches freely over water. More myth conflict drawn together, this time the heart alone held aloft. Its interminable burning lighting the way. Weak sun sits above horizon, barely describing its own form through ashen clouds. A light weaker and more opaque than the brilliant illumination of the burning heart. The internal excised become supplementary sun, held tight in the hand of Acéphale: a new, corrupted godhead delivering the clarity of a dispelling light. Myth world illuminated. Light clears path for destructive embrace. March continues on and on across times indefinite.

Acéphale stops, dropping to one knee, intoxicated by clamour of dark night grabbing. Malign influence reforms the figure, heart becomes grape vine as Acéphale slips into a Dionysian mode. The clarity of Apollonian flight giving way to the brute matter of rock and the heady elixir of dark night spiked with grape-vine intoxication. Temples collapse in heterogeneous spilling that takes over, edifices shake and crumble

in the intolerable continuity released and left to wash over the final pall-bearers of the discontinuous erect in mythic world. Acéphale venture, a sprawl of continuity shattering profanations that have slipped into the mythic register as just so many stabilising forces. Frenzy of Dionysian surrogate shatters and rends. Corrupted myth tears down bearers of dissimulation, forcing myth into a radical and capricious form.

Blade strikes back into chest of Acéphale, a perverse doubling of begetting gesture, one more world enfolded in chaotic edifice slowly composed by Acéphale through interference. Chaotic night finds its source in chest incision. Once more Acéphale bearer of corruption, a slick continuity spilt from mythic world right back to killing strike in forest clearing. Chaotic passage of worlds.

Groin skull finds new life, appropriating serpent locks of Medusa, deathly stare taking on renewed force.

Amok through all Acéphale roams. Back to feet from Dionysian kneeling, Acéphale charges out of dark abyss.

Amok, amok, amok.

Frenetic running carries Acéphale into thick of maenadic orgy. Bodies twisted, penetrated, stripped of all.

Out of chaotic night Acéphale charges.

A new head!

Once again neck adorned with the penetrative stare of two deep-set, glowering eyes.

Bullheaded!

Acéphale charges with renewed fury. All the while amok.

Acéphale charges; bodies frenzy.

Blade held aloft, puncturing emblem of profane incision.

Charge continues as maenadic frenzy grows. Amok more and more, bodies multiply until orgy of war consumes whole landscape. Knot of conflict interspersed with serpents and grape vines seeding intoxicating destruction. Brimstone blasted from gullets of rock, debris scattered high into skies above. Another dark spill contribution, planetary excess expelled.

Bullheaded twice!

Acéphale stares front and back. Minotaur rage clashed with Janus-headed melancholy. Forward frenzy, backward amok.

More mythic corruption. Ascent spreads clamour of destruction, the Dionysian sprit appropriated and drawn out to its most proper excess. Mythic corruption, exposing and dispelling. A myth refuting the confines of a type, the simple division into discontinuity. Instead, clashing. Heterogeneity forced into cruel contortions, continuous set free against the world. A careless and destructive embrace.

Hedonism of a brief, spasmodic moment. Impossible to maintain intensity.

Head chop ends what head chop began. A strike of blade unseen leaves bullhead on ground. Dead eyes staring. Scraped-clean skull suspended between horns. Interminable burning.

Acéphale disappeared. Off into other realms.

Cycle begun again.





# Tremors

*Trembling, a minor cataclysm. Vibration taking hold builds in frequency and intensity.*

*Shudders pattern, increase, then overlap, forming into jolts that disrupt. Vigour comes from tiny oscillation catching then gripping with a decisive force.*

*Tremor travels, out out out from indefinite source. Rapid spread carries force of hesitancy through. Neither here nor there, tremor approximates place. Haunting vibrato at heart, indecisive and unplaceable.*

### *Trembling identical*

A trembling, right at the heart of identity. A slow, sorrowful vibrato mourning the impossibility of the absolutely identical. Measured out around this dirge, identity appears as a shifting, never-quite equivalence. Patterned upon a common note, tremor at the heart of identity skips and slurs: drawing nearer, drawing further. Proximity fluctuates as tremor slips past common anchor in a pattern of elision and missed groundings. Each and every time what is tight-close becomes progressively distant, caught in a motion always carrying past before slowing and arcing back. One passage then another. A transit continuous.

Acéphale stands, alert and imperious. Muscles twitch as body rises anew. Tensed musculature holding tall, quivering from exertion. All over minor trembles ripple. Magisterial stance of Acéphale undermined by strange fallibility.

Acéphale, tremulous. Each time composed anew; each time worked then reworked. A patterned identity, caught by the same tremors as the twitch of muscle. A strange composite of corpuscular spasm and trembling identity. Appearing as if heart's tremor grafted onto epidermal layer, excision pulling tremble outside body.

Passage of tremble collates structure of identical, its tremulous heart. A difference of the trembling identical three ways: identical, not outside; outside given, then pulled back in grasping motion that acknowledges gift; identical, thus different from all other identicals. An each time identical, an each time grounding a difference. Vibrato passing by each time a testament to the wavering heart of difference found in the identical.

Difference *proper*, each and every time comes from identity, from the identical that grasps itself. Each time itself, over and over again: itself, itself, itself. Each time itself founded in the grasping of the vibrato at the heart of identity, a momentary

latching hold of the centre of the tremulous motion. Illusive stability at the heart. Such illusion anchors the identical to a pattern of minor errancy constituting measurable deviations of difference. The pattern of vibrato thus stands as an elucidation of the different in its manifest relation to the identical. Grasping itself, identity gives difference, each time drawing out a constitutive relation between the unidentifiable ground and the tremors of errancy that never escape the pull of grasping. Such a motion leaves the identical with a placid and controllable programme of difference, a difference proper that establishes identity as different from difference. Two regimes of difference result: difference and difference proper.

Difference exceeds the identical; difference proper is constituted by identity in its motion of establishing itself as different from difference. Difference proper is thus patterned on identity and its grasp, a by-product of the propriety of identity and its refusal of the improper. Difference, just the improper.

Acéphale arises. Tremor builds. Vibrato at the heart of identity picks up sympathetic trembling and a vigorous correspondence begins to assert itself across the pattern. Wider range of motion pulls in greater errancy, greater instability.

Magisterial arising rejects the placid vibrato of difference proper for the great clamour of difference. Worked then unworked through persistent recomposition, Acéphale arising dispels difference proper in a cacophony of errancy. Further compounded in the corruption of death confusion proliferates, meeting difference proper with the full force of a difference in excess. Trembling like never before, a new magnitude.

A torpid being. Rich, intoxicated sleep.

Difference struck down. Transit of a simple passivity. Entranced, differenced from outside, subject awoke. Grasping gesture traverses awakening, a reach never equivalent.

Entranced, trembled through. A strike of difference into the torpid. Flash from outside illuminated interior of awakened subject. An interior imparted from elsewhere. Difference struck down from outside, transit entranced.

Before the birth of the subject tremble passes through individualised passivity. An individuality conferred from outside before the tremble takes hold. Collective heart of passivity places the individualisation of this passive existence as a common structure. At stake in the strike of difference from elsewhere is the identity of a subject conferred from outside. Individual passivity, without identity, an indifferent difference. Strike imparts difference from elsewhere, gifting an interior; tremble takes hold, a subject's vibrato. The tremulous voice that spills from subject's mouth a latent resonance of the strike of difference.

The grace and gift of an entrancing tremor: a finite identity.

A singular individualisation, a trembling identity arisen from indifferent difference. Tremor traverses with imparted rhythm: the birth of a subject.

Difference proper comes from perverted identity. A subject always already awoken. Restless and translating the external impartation of a birth into a vortex of self-grasping: a terrible, interminable cycle. Differenced from outside, identity always carries the improper close. A relation drawn from elsewhere. A deeply buried secret.

Strike of blade kills. Night spills from wound. Darkness engulfs witnessing group. A strike of difference from elsewhere. Group lost, convulsed ecstatically in spilt night.

A trembling passage of occlusive darkness transits bodies, pours into eyes, fills mouth, blocks nose, clouds ears, imparts a tremulous motion that drives ecstatic contortions.

Night, heavy opacity of exposition: covers over, swallows up. All lost as the present of a birth gets pulled into the ecstatic impulse, a terrible distemporalised birthing that is drawn quickly, violently into the present of a night spilt. Immediate tangibility of arising from slumber, lost in an instant as convulsions of ecstasy refuse testimonial memory. Birth in night loses the latent relation, no longer always having passed, birth comes with a confounding force to coincide with the singular moment of grasping itself. A telescopic collapse that slams discrete parts into a tight, knotted proximity. Birth meets itself instantaneously, impartation strikes against impartation.

Group in ecstasy carries through full force of trembling traversal. Contorted, entranced. A passivity imparted with the vibrato of an immediate consonance, the raw state of a subject exposed through the collapse of temporal parameters. Ecstatic contortion splits and distends time through a night that occludes all. Bodies contorted lose temporal dimension through capture of ecstatic rending. Pressed always outside, grounding of present lost in the heavy night spilt. Tick of time loses anchor, its count dripping from a decaying mechanism.

Collision of birth, collision of death in the each time singular contortion of ecstatic bodies. Always once again overtaken by convulsion, always once again inverted, exposed outside. Such convolutions leave birth of subject as impartation indefinitely past, collapsed and drawn into a single, instantaneous present of ecstatic body. A birth that for an instant collides with motion of grasping-itself. The graze of a touch against the knuckles of the closing hand. The briefest glance, just enough in that single instant to highlight the imparting gesture of the transiting tremor.

Muscle twitch hits group like a bullet, a first flash of revelation. Acéphale arises to gaping mouths, astonished cries. Exposed with great clarity: the strike of difference from outside.

The tremor of entrancing difference lingers, draw of its first passage more or less retained. Vibrato gains vigour, finding sympathetic resonance in the clamour of Acéphale arising.

Revelation appears through clamour: Acéphale arising not so different after all. Another strike from elsewhere, another impartation knotted into slumber, into birth and death. Just another soul imparted, here, together.

Acéphale begotten in corrupted process of awakening. Up out of the slumber of night, Acéphale awakens in a terrible birth from darkness. Acéphale arises, confounding the grasp of the already awake subject. Group stupefied, mouths agape. The very identity of the subject at stake. Impartation of soul's awakening stalls before it can grip Acéphale, can let Acéphale feel in itself a distinction. Acéphale stuck, indifferent difference.

Acéphale, stuttered awakening. Arising carries motion of awakening until disrupted by bodily recomposition. Revision and removal restart process. Impartation gets stuck as tremors dislodge the rhythm of identity, sending the vibrato into a chaotic variation of intensities. Awakening stutters before feeling takes hold, sending the logic of individuation tumbling, breaking apart at the feet of Acéphale arising. Just more detritus of errancy embodied.

Group, open mouthed, stammer. A sympathetic tremor of the mouth enlivened by the tremulous stance of Acéphale, corrupted awakening. Sleep ennobled, standing tall: tired eyes and gaping yawn of Acéphale.

Acéphale, arising from spilt night, confirms nothing but a strange collision and short-circuit of death and begetting. All witnessing refuted in dark spill, testimony lost in somnolent past of another world, a world of ecstatic bodies dispersed in spilt night.

Acéphale, provocateur, arises indifferent and unknowing. But that very condition of arising testifies to the impartation of the subject in an indefinite and always past. The continual, tremulous entrance of the soul's immaterial awakening, each time shared between one and another. Ecstasy, arising, revelations of the necessarily imparted individual subject. Identical from difference improperly given to identity. A difference from outside, the trembling entrance, the grace of a touch enlivening an individualised passivity. Impartation, a necessary precedent to ecstasy in spilt night. Common measure of impartation revealed as bodies swallowed and lost, unable in ecstasy to testify to the remarkable entrance of tremor's transit.



*Cracking schism tears. From minor split, world rent. Groundswell of energy hews open through fractures; an aleatory, explosive process. Cracks split. Spontaneous join of one fracture then another traces a pattern of subsurface infractions of integrity. The underside of the façade shows its hand. Pock-marked, weathered, substantially undermined. The crack tracks and traces minor rebellions of material, the homogeneous edifice corrupted by pockets of deviance.*

*Tremulous force releases a cascade of staggered and disruptive motions into the world. Minor agitant builds in intensity, conjoining other invocations of errancy.*

*Crack carries force. An elegant dissemination: disintegral part to disintegral part. Quick split joins dance through material carrying just enough force to nurture the tremor. From one to another vibrato builds, deviant pockets inflect and contribute. Resonance gains. A more voluminous clamour.*

*Split crack become thunderous rend. Vibrato builds further, disrupting and dislodging. Force presses from groundswell outside. Plane splits from passage of tremor.*

*Vertiginous, rampant split divides.*

*Pulled wide open.*

*Schism.*

*Sympathetic resonance traverses, entrances as it moves by. The captivation of a harmony, a vibrato ringing and embellishing. The tremulous dirge of a single note, hesitant and perpetually slipping from its ground. A single, soulful voice.*

*Da, da, da*

Ecstatic impartation comes to torpid subject, hypnotised subject. From elsewhere comes a strike of difference. In spilt night not mesmeric, soulful voice as progenitor of torpor, but the sacrificer and the chaotic potency of the blade. Night spill, subject grabbed, caught in the infectious and overpowering flow of pure heterogeneity.

Spilt night, a vigour of tremor that exceeds the gestures awakening from torpor. A heightened, frenzied hypnosis and subsequent revival that collapses the procedural structure into a series of instantaneous, staccato events. Each time anew, one after another, a rapid cascade of tightly packed awakenings and hypnoses that intensify the process into a relentless circling about.

In hypnosis, torpid existence suspends present of presence. *There*, but without the grasping-itself motion that constitutes the motility and effective realisation of the subject. A subject stuck, held without a clear and distinct correspondence of *there*, subjected rather to a *there* interposed from elsewhere. A hypnotised subject, mutualised *da*.

Split *da* from elsewhere shares and partitions the same *da* of the suspended subject.

Frenzied and heightened in spilt night, hypnotic grasp circuits frantically, putting under, bringing back in a relentless, continually collapsing space that leaves the whole scene to fall in on itself. A vortex, a folded-in vector of tremor with form occluded by thick night. Interminable turning gains material persistence as spilt night, constituting an intensive violation of the always-past consignment of impartation.

The split *da*, mutual obligation of the other who imparts becomes a runaway replication: *da da da...* Rapid proliferation marks out the collapsing space of ecstatic convulsion: each time anew, a staccato, frenzied repetition. Complicit *da*, exorbitant,

given over in ecstatic convulsions to the allure of elsewhere. Ecstasy, disregard of propriety. *Da*, never a pure space but rather reliant on difference imparted from elsewhere. Always conflictual. A scission, a great rending split.

Improper imparts. Difference from outside gifted to identity through the resonance of a tremor. A brief entrance of the brilliant strange. A passage across, improper gives as stars streak celestial span, the quality of sidereal mystery that shines from unfathomable distance, the graceful caress of light already old. Incomprehensible traversal for one moment of vision.

Improper, right at the root. Impartation from elsewhere always in the shared heart of a cramped *da*. The improper subtends the most propriety of places.

Spilt night exposes *da* as commingled, a transit of bodies that moves from mere vibratory resonance to a full interspersal indistinguishing each and every *da*. More than the simple interlocking of limbs, entwined arms, legs, mouths and flesh, *da* as propriety opens and spills into the diffuse nudity of its originary form.

Spilt night, the improper exposed as such. Conflicted space of *da* made visible. Light clouded by thick night removes interference. Ecstasy follows. What begins from the blade and its great strike of difference, continues to be animated by the vigour of the revelation of elsewhere imparting. The improper comes with a provocative hedonism, the debauched and revelatory gesture of one in another.

Imparted by the improper, *da* accedes to a masked form. The propriety overlaid, established on top of and right at the improper. Night spilt unmask *da*, stripping back layers of propriety so the scuffed and chaotic form of the improper is exposed.

Ecstasy appears as a convulsed form of grasping-itself. A motion driven by the disappointment of a shifting inequivalence, a never quite appropriate result. Enmeshed

bodies, debauched and orgiastic events, play out a perverse parody of obsessive grasping-itself. Over and over and over grasp misappropriates. One part in excess then another. Continuous inadequation.

Ek-sistence, conduct of *da* as transitivity of being, a tremulous underpinning of the heart of existence. Thus the grasping-itself of the subject appears as a sympathetic aftershock, an action modelled on the trembling heart of existence trying to stabilise itself in a formal register. A grasping-itself that will not let go, but is each time exposed anew as the grasp continually seeks to re-adjust its grip, in search of a more precise, more emphatic hold. The simplicity of a sense pinned down, appropriated and left to stand. A tremor locked down, guarded and preserved: inalienable, propered, normed.

Subject marks an anxious grappling, motivated by allaying the disquiet of a ground always shuddered by the transit and entrance of the improper. Subject thus comes to produce the proper as a separate, homogeneous quality, a reserve excised from the terrible improper and instantiated as monolith at the heart of the subject.

Sense locked in the everyday facticity of *Dasein*, pinned and held by the propriety of the subject. The transitivity of *da* and its improper impartation missed. The whole structure of subject ossifies, a propering of sense held tight. No longer a letting be, no longer a conduct released, but a taking of the improper by a gesture that forgets the tenebrous quality of the gift offered without alienation. Propriety assumed in the forgotten legacy of impartation. The improperness of *Dasein* presupposed as a simple proper that misses the proximity of the proper/improper touching. Improper and proper turn about, a shifting profile of one then another. The propering of the improper impartation catches the wrong side of the turning, just a full-face vision of the proper and nothing more. Propering freezes the turn, stuck still and masking the

obverse. The subject just an excision, a specific moment of turning in which the proper is separated from its proximal relation of touching. Such a separation provides an impetus for the obsessive motion of grasping-itself. The subject, only ever an impropriety appropriated as the presumed proper. Misbegotten, taken as emphatic structure, the tremors of the improper are pulled right into the heart of the subject. Action of grasping-itself finds its interminable protocol in the improper foundation.

Subject grasping itself states a refrain of proclaimed properness. Propriety acceded to each and every time in the motion of the grasp. At the heart of the misappropriation a repudiation of the improper. Its existence as a constitutional part of the proper excised, its impartation of the interior of the subject refuted. A series of denials of the role of impropriety are taken as the most proper enclave of the subject.

The subject grasping itself is a continued statement of the potency of the improper and its easy capacity to be mistaken for the proper through proximity. The structure of the *right up against*, the touching of the proper and the improper, is carried into the subject. Its proximity is masked in the repeat statement of propriety made by the subject. A dissimulative obsession that clouds the capacity to distinguish such a close and familiar distribution. It is only in the resurgent tremors of an explosive disruption that such a structure begins to break.

The proximity of the proper and improper allays the privilege of the proper assumed by the subject. The proper is not partitioned off from the world in the constitution of the subject, but is rather abandoned to the world. The proper/improper touching that imparts *da* exposes the function of finitude in *Dasein*'s relation to Being. Finitude, an opening of sense to indetermination, an exposure to the infinite. Finitude is not a prior fixing of powerlessness, but an opening to indeterminacy, an opening to

an unstable and each time conducted engagement, the entrancing proximity of the proper and improper.

*Dasein* should thus involve a sceptical relation to the subject and an acknowledgement of the tremors that entrance and run right through the subject's stating of itself. *Dasein* would therefore be the acknowledgement of the work of the improper as the impartation of *da* and the touching proximity of the proper/improper relation.

*Dasein* would thus see the subject structure as a misappropriation of the improper, and in doing so would grasp the resonance of the improper at the heart of identity.

One flash,

then another.

Light.

Dark.

Intense on-off click repeats, incessant. Staccato illumination of action.

Distribution modalised. Each part layered up through high-speed alternation into a repeat pattern of modalities that gain efficacy when appearing as one. Singular embodiment of difference. Strobing light gives motion a staccato quality that breaks down fluid motion into strange bit-parts. Snapshots to be observed, extruded, analysed.

One profile, then another. A turning, then turning back. Motion continuous and relentless. Combative reassertion. Strobing carries difference. Each time flash pulls through the logic of two distinct parts into a scene of action. Flash, the right-against proximity of an alternation.

One strobe after another. Obverse repeats. Continuous turning of the improper and the proper states commingling of *da*. The profile of one then another. A turn, a contour described, an overlap, an obverse exposed. Statement continues. Only in the strobing flash of two profiles described does obversal proximity appear. Only in the revelation of the subject as the improper misappropriated can the ecstatic tremble at the heart of existence gain apparency. Ecstasy relies on the proper reasserting itself in its very troubling proximity to the improper. Ek-stasis, tremulous underpinning of existence.

What is seen in ecstatic response is not a heightened disposition in relation to a provocation, but simply the exposure of the trembling proper/improper impartation at the heart of existence. The simple traversal of existence as *da*, an active *there* given from the commingling of the proper/improper, from the also-imparted *da* of elsewhere.

Right-at proximity facilitates mutual transit, a vibratory resonance that entrances elsewhere. One trembles the other, strobing turn continues, action always inflected by mutual resonances that tremble across.

Such proximity of the proper/improper attests to the problematic of the proprietary and the moment of vision. First of all the continuous inflection of the proper by the improper, at root even the impartation of what is properly interior in identity by the improper of an elsewhere ruins the structure of the proprietary. Second, the proper/improper transit as a clash of rhythms ruins the moment of vision as a properly determined distinction. The proper/improper transit restates the incumbency of the moment of vision upon the entrance of one by the other. Transit disrupts propriety, offering a modalisation of the moment of vision through differentiated distributions of the proximal entrance. Moment loses its emphatic force, clarity no

more than an illusive snapshot of proper/improper transit. A brief, brilliant flash. Seen without correspondent dark of strobing, as if blink of eye and strobe frequency in perfect sync.

Ecstasy, as response to the heterogeneous opacity of spilt night, is merely an exemplar of the improper reasserting its domain. Spilt night offers only stained moments of vision, the decoupled synchronicity of flash and blink now seen only partially as the trailing off or the yet to come. The particular character of ecstasy comes from its trembling influence on the proper and its exposition of the tremulous heart of *da*. Bodies knotted, touching and intertwined provide an approximating figure of the spacing of *da* as imparted from elsewhere. Contortion and knotting, a most proper response to improper impartation of there. A revelation in the heavy darkness of spilt night.

Indetermination of sense touched in the convocation of *da*. Entranced, hypnotised by tremor of improper, sense encounters multiple modalities of conduct without norm that run riot in the convoked *da*.

The improprieness of invoking a proprietary and pinned down sense of sense resounds clearly in the convoked space where sense is at stake. Asking questions of sense, as the most proper action of *Dasein*, finds dignity in the continued resonance of its conduct without the impropriety of a propering, a norming, of action. Conduct carries an invocation that comes from right-against proximity of the proper/improper and its strobing. This invocation is the clamour of the singular for difference, the elsewhere that is radically differentiated from the simple rhythm of identity. A rhythm counting the regular inflections of the subject and its syncopation with the proper misbegotten.



Ek-stasis, exposed in the commingled *da*, leaves subject in tatters. Exposing the gesture of grasping-itself, assurance and propriety of the subject are opened to the disruption of the improper, the disruption of elsewhere. In ecstasy subject slips, become impossible fully to claim propriety or dominion.

Exposure to the improper dispels subject's illusion. Testimony, reliant on the propriety of the *da* opened by tiny incisions of elsewhere. Subject's testimony loses coherence when propriety of seeing and having seen is exposed as inflected by the improper.

Exposure of the grasping-itself motion of subject introduces a gap or delay of the testimony. A motion of inadequacy that when heightened in ecstatic convulsion loses possibility of clear witnessing. Testimony loses clarity when ruined subject attempts to lay claim to that which the improper has imparted.

Touching, right up against. Cramped proximity through which tremor traverses, a sympathetic transit of resonance. Right up against, susceptible to a relation of entrance despite the pressing incompatibility of difference. Right up against, co-implicated through tremor.

Touch offers right up against a close and intimate exposition. The mutuality of two nervous tissues embraced through tactile reciprocity. Touch presses, whether tight against or the grace of brushing past. The tantalising clamour of reciprocal contact brings nervous response: heady, timid, worn indifference, a terrible trauma. Each and every time a singular response articulated in the right up against.

Touching touches. Sensing itself, touch grounds sense as an autogenic experience. The basis of the body as a vibrant, nervous reciprocity. Extended into the world, touch waits expectantly in a span across body, a threshold of proper/improper

meeting. A touch from elsewhere imparts the improper, proper and improper meet at epidermal threshold, touch shivers through, nervous excitement of shared entrance.

Right at the heart of identity the proper/improper plays out as a mutual entrance. Right at the heart the proper/improper is invoked.

Right at the heart an intervention.

Excised.

Replaced.

Surgical grace responsive to acute trauma. Two distinct paces meet, method allays frenzy. In the cavity of the chest the proper/improper takes on grave stakes. Its entrance engaged with the terrible clamour of life or death set in tension through the intricate work of the blade: the cutting, excising, splicing, nurturing actions of an intervention.

The very stuff of propriety, scarlet red, beating, offered in love.

*Tremor intensifies. Increased magnitude carries new force, a great energetic retort to placid juncture of tectonic plates. The grind slips. A jolt set loose.*

*Reciprocal pressures relent, shift of great masses. Crash split rumble. Slip-jolt of plates splits each wide. Tremor traverses, rapid sprawl from crack epicentre.*

*Enlivening quiet ground, rent becomes trembling as tremor passes. Wave after wave of tremor slips into unsurities of ground. Inconsistencies break apart in traversal of tremor. Material worked free undermines. Edifice corrupted by its own constituent parts.*

*Tremble multiplies cracks and splits. Tiny secondary repetitions of the crescendo of slipping mass.*

*Split wide, shift modifies ground in a frenzied realignment. Cracked and crumbling enclosure relents. Sundering of mantle sets loose earth's flaming heart. Searing liquidity spills, a celestial legacy buried deep below. Cavities open for great spilling. Convulsing orifices dispel palls of ashen smoke, laval streams, and subsurface accretions of rock. The very stuff of the earth spat clear into the rarefied atmosphere. Great tremor modifies constitution. Transit of body shifts accretions, modifies consistencies and material distribution. For a moment world entranced. All stop for tremble.*

## Throng

Against all cacophony *Dasein* gives sense to Being, makes sense of Being through the opening of Being as at issue. What is at stake in *Dasein* is the very sense of Being. A sense that is an each time singular relation, a proprietary relation that is shot through with the acknowledged impartation of the improper.

*Dasein* makes sense as action, a conduct of making sense.

*Dasein* conducts, a comportment of or towards sense as a properness of concern. But a comportment each time singular and each time unaccomplished, thus always a relation of finitude, a relation to the always partial engagement with sense. Conduct enacts the *there*. *Da*, commingled, improper, trembling.

Conduct of sense regulated through finitude, a holding wide open, leaves a series of correspondent acts to unfold without normative regulation. What follows is a whole chain of ungoverned acts. At the heart of *Dasein*, its conduct, its improper impartation, is the ethical imperative to act, to run up against sense. A fundamental ethics must be read in the conduct and transit of *da*.

Proper's severance of the fallen, the improper, raises the proper into a proprietary seeing, an ownmost vision freed to be properly own. Such a gesture ignores the commingled *da* that provides precedent for the proprietary assumption of severing the fallen.

Acceding to vision, the consummate properness of a separation from the mundane makes its rise on the haphazard scaffold of presumed propriety. Such a structure is pinned right through with improper insertions that are right at the heart of the edifice of the proper. Such acceding thus before all else possesses a conflictual heart, a heart run through by the improper.

The impartation of *da* from the improper, from difference, commingles the *there* of ek-static existence. *Da*, as necessity of *Dasein* by whom and for whom the decision is made, thus pulls the mode of decision into a space of convocation, a partial and mutual chorus at the heart of decision.

The proper assumed is always a flaccid, failing gesture. A reach and a fall. A decision for a propriety already conflicted. A decision for a mode already improper.

Right at the proper, the improper. Mutual adjunct. Strobing, trembling: cycles or entrances. Adjacent proximity holds tight. Commingled *da*, proclaimed by a chorus of voices within. Resonant notes inflect decision. The differencing of the proper and the improper-mundane decried by a partition of voices that testify to the very adjunct of proper/improper. Carried through into moments of decision, a proper position, risen up or given down with grace, comes from the beating hearts of commingled *da*. One then another proclaim: "we are the fallen, already decided."

Decision to be decided not a stake of proper/improper appropriation, not a stake of vision's propriety, but simple decision of existence given and imparted by Being.

Severance of the fallen in quest for the proper takes place in ignorance of the improper impartation at the base of *da*. The *da*, in the name of which the proprietary is pursued, already conflicts and refutes ascension from the fallen. Acceding to the proper masks the very impropriety of such a gesture, a rejection of the improper that is precisely proper to *da*. The severance of the fallen is an attempt to reverse the tremulous impartation at the heart of *da*. A coup by the subject. An attempt to wrench *da* from its commingled register into the resolutely monolithic. A misguided snatch of *da* into the presumed propriety of a pure inflection. All a great refusal of the commingled origin of birth.

Such gestures take place in ignorance of the each time singular and shared impartation of *da*, and thus are the proper appropriated and rendered as an absolute purity: an improper grasp of the proper.

The proper that tries to accede from the fallen simply repeats the corrupted gesture of defining an absolute propriety. The conflict of defining through the improperly imparted interior from elsewhere a spacing of *da* radically separate. Yet *da* takes place in a world and as a world shared. The ek- at the basis of ecstatic existence is nothing but the inseparable constituent of *da* commingled. Such ambition for absolute propriety is a regression and simple replication of a dormant homogeneity, a sleep before sleep, absolute inaction.

The fallen always pertains. Alongside, right at, an adjunct and accosting proximity. The fallen and its co-implication in the *da* thus constitute a properness of propriety. A proper position of vision that takes place alongside the fallen, in a fulsome, tacit acknowledgement of the role of the improper in propriety.

A position of vision is always from amongst bodies. The warm ingress of commingling: pressures, conflicts, caresses. Always a vision amongst, always a vision partial, occluded and situated: set deep into the *da* and its improper impartation.

A vision always transited by bodies. Transversal crossings, obfuscation by disparate parts: a flailing arm, limp hand, arc of a tired back. Each time vision from within the very thick of bodies.

A vision entranced. Capitulation, distraction, the pull of an attendant and commanding world. Always the call of the commingled, tugging at the very *da* imparted. Impeding, drawing in.

The proper properly conflicted thus waits within the adjunct relation to the improper. The proper right at the improper engages with *da* as a commingling through

a movement right against the fallen that breaks through into a tiny space of liberty. A gap opened by peering between knotted limbs, attempting to hear through the chorus of voices.

An intrusion right at, without resolution. Thus the importance of just the smallest of divisions, a division right at the heart: intimate, brushing against, inside, co-operative, disjunctive. The stranger arrives in intimate communion, a commingled convocation in the very proper heart of propriety.

Stranger always comes with an improper reserve. An adjunct past that presses right up against propriety. A small part of something else, some elsewhere that may well constitute the propriety of the stranger in its inalienable form. A minimal reserve of difference, a mere ghost, an opacity or trembling outline of just some part withheld.

Even in the grafting and splicing of the strange right into the heart of existence, the tremble and the opacity continue. A loose sketch, an approximation of propriety masquerades but the tiny reserve offers the smallest opposed pressure of resistance.

The rightat of the stranger carries through the tremor of impartation. A resonance of the contagion of elsewhere that partially constitutes propriety. The improper returns with a renewed tremor, a renewed force of clamour for resolution in the approach of the stranger. The tiny part on the threshold re-states its initial role of impartation. A renewed pressure from commingled origination.

The strangeness of the improper right-at finds sustained refrain in spilt night and Acéphale arising. Improper foams over as heterogeneity of dark occlusion. A frenetic, runaway impartation that floods forest clearing. A secondary resonance of impartation is carried through from the celestial strike of lightning bolt. An intense strangeness of mythic impartation, the celestial strike sends a searing vision of the

proper become improper through its aerial trajectory. An absolute heavenly propriety that disrupts and holds another world in captive awe.

Resonances overlap. The improper spilling exceeds the partial reserve of a strangeness to become an intense and overwhelming expansion of what was right at the proper, of what had been held in a tremulous reserve. The only possible response to flood of improper is bodies rent, contorted, knotted, lost. Improper spills over, then overwhelms propriety. The placid *da* becomes a site of frantic commingling, an acquiescence to the improper.

The stranger overwhelms. An almost fully strange object of intercession lacerates the propriety of the sacrificial offering. Penetration of cold steel spills night, the stranger enlarged to fill the world. Such a strike merely a modality of the stranger that occupies the very heart of the *da*, the trembling heart of existence that is already imparted from a stranger elsewhere.

Refrain of strangeness in spilt night operates as absurd testimony to the stranger. The body of victim offers a convulsed overreaction in response to blade strike. A tireless spilling and relinquishment of the improper, an emptying out of impropriety that exceeds the bodies' reserve. Leaving just a husk for a moment, in a brief fraction of a second perhaps a site of full, absolute propriety. Right at the heart, when night is thickest and its most occlusive, when bodies are fully dispossessed, knotted, perhaps at this moment a radical propriety of another world takes hold. Through the transition of dying, a right-at pressure must slip through, a strobe of the proper/improper that decouples, leaving an at-the-same-time exposition of proper/improper that undoes bounds as the improper is evacuated into the clearing and the proper is left to collapse back upon itself in the absence of its trembling, imparted legacy.



At some point before the improper clears, Acéphale must transition. A begetting that must pull in a new improper, the radical and terrible impropriety of the sacrificial blade. Strike of death begets. Improper imparts a strange and corrupted propriety. A headless body, slipping out of world, thus imperious, unimpeachable and taking on the role of the stranger become god-head.

Terrible twitch of muscle that precedes Acéphale arising is the tremble of the improper intensified and made visible. Acéphale standing, up from supine pose of sacrifice into clear night of the forest follows a motion as if animated by a tiny tremble of muscle. A twitch that had indicated just the smallest fragment of hope for a new arising. The tremor gains in magnitude, gripping limp body, transiting, entrancing nerves, reinvigorating muscular subframe. A forced re-animation.

The transition from strike of death to arising plays out in the forest clearing the very structure of the role of the improper in propriety. Sacrificial event shows the role of the improper right at the heart of impartation, at the heart of the *da* that the ecstatic existence of each and every member of the group discloses.

Radical impropriety of blade begets, sending a tremulous wave right through the sacrificed body. Tremble dissipates except for a tiny fragment that interpellates, maintains a persistence, then stubbornly takes hold through a continued resonance that builds in magnitude.

Acéphale arises as absolutely strange, then recomposes. A headless being cleared of excrescent parts. No longer the head, no longer the heart. A right at, tremulous form that beats a rhythm resonant throughout the extent of the whole body. A heart excised, no longer beating but enflamed with the improper. A continuous burning that takes the place of the ever-steady beat counting out the extent of a life. A

heart now in excess, but enlivened in the oxygen-rich air, a combustion exposing intimate effect of a strike of the improper and its radical impartation.

Acéphale interferes in propertious world as excessive, heterogeneous interloper. Acéphale, a stranger. An embodiment of impropriety that presses and exposes the right-at quality of the improper at the very heart of the world. Such impropriety an absolute out-of-placeness. Improper bearing enables celestial ascent, enables mythic adventure. The shifting composition of the embodiment of Acéphale approximates the improper as interference. The sketch of an outline, a trembling opacity always in revision. A quality always shifting and disruptive that shows the work of the improper allowed to foam over right at. Limit become porous, osmotic.

Trembling resurgence of the improper carries right through the sacrificial scene into the mythic realms where Acéphale roams. From the terrestrial to the heavens, a great streak of the resonant improper through worlds. Such a force of impropriety imparts trembling difference elsewhere, passing as a transit, clear arc across span of skies, entrancing and captivating through flight. Improperious, a stranger, out of place and intervening through a transit without permission.

Acéphale recomposes through flight, improper shifting forms, dispelling and disavowing component parts in conquest for an absolute divestment of propriety. Ragged parts hold defiantly in places, but grafted with new accoutrements: a grape vine, bullhead. Formal shifts imparted as tremble modulates.

Shifting identification, Acéphale each time the same, each time anew. Tremor underlies shifting composition, but in a modulating form that loses a continual consonance. All that can be grasped is a persistence of tremor without clarification of its modalities. Acéphale, a tremulous composition: improperness beats right at the heart.

The mundanity of the decision: the decision for existence right at the heart of existence. Imparted, a gift given, an abandonment, all precursors to the simple decision of existence, to exist for the simple possibility to decide. The each time possible of the decision, for this, for that, for existence, freed for and to existence.

The mundanity of the decision. Rooted deep in the very heart of the mundane, the decision of existence decides for existence, within and right against the mundane the decision is made. Right in the thick of the fallen decision takes place: the cloudy obfuscation of the too close, the pressing, cloying, demanding they. At the clouded level decision occurs, not elevated, rarefied, separated, propered.

The mundanity of the decision. A choice taken in the midst of the fallen for an existence. Thronged, choked, without pre-planned clarity: an impulsive, indulgent decision. Just made and gotten done. Decision taking place with the fallen in the thick of the shared world of the fallen. A decision made with propriety at the time of deciding. A relative propriety, singular to the event of decision in the each time particular moment of deciding. Thus a properness to the always singular event of decision. The each time decided movement already taking place in the imparted *da*.

Resonance tremors through *da*, imparting the proper/improper compact that sits right against at the heart of decision. Already in decision improper stains the world of disposition, conflicts even the most proprietary of choices to heed the call, to be attentive and carry through one side of the right at composition of the *da* in favour of another. Such a gesture comes from within the thronging, forgetting for a moment the thronging impartation at the heart of it all. Decision comes already from the convocation, the compact of the proper/improper right at *da*. Decision always carries

through a residual tremor of the groundswell of the impartation of *da*. Decision always in the midst, thronged and fallen.

The decision of existence from the cramped space of *da* establishes a resonant passage that opens the question of the sense of existence. The apparency of existence and the decision for an exposition of apparency comes from a properness already conflicted. Decision cannot be made in distinction from the compact of the fallen, because it only takes place within the knotted space of the fallen. Decision only takes place in a space imparted by the very improperness of the fallen that an elevation, an alienation, or a distinction from, would presume to negate. Always in concert with the fallen, the conflicted intimacy of a wide-open compact.

Decision is nothing more than an harmonic overtone of the tremor that imparts. Decision is just a resonance carried within the imparted *da*. It is a properness stated under the influence of the improper: intoxicated, misled, imperceptive.

The strange hedonism of the improper gives the tremor imparting *da* a distant quality. In the charm of allure the practicalities of impartation are abandoned. The ek- of ecstatic existence provides a continuous motion of decoupling and re-connecting in the gesture of grasping itself. The improper forgets itself, it is the motion of abandonment already once again found each and every time in the forgetting of the originary impartation.

The rhapsode of the improper plays out a forgotten composition of ecstatic existence. Trembling impartation, always carried forth. A minor tremble at the heart of the continued motion. A pulsating and consistent energy. A count continuous.

Decision is nothing more than the affective resonance of the tremor. A shift in magnitude through resonance momentarily exposing impartation, exposing the right at pressure of the throng and as complicit in the proprietary *da*. Magnitude shifting

places emphasis on the fallen, setting the throng right at the heart of the proper exposition of the question of existence.

Decision could never be otherwise in light of the impartation of *da* from the trembling of the improper, the tremor of elsewhere. Improper right at the heart of existence, the constitutive heart of *da*, cannot be disavowed in a motion towards a properness of disposition in the world against an improper and distracting swell of the fallen. Improper persists in the aftershock of impartation, improper persists right at the proper, at *da* as the most proprietary. Decision thus always comes in a cavalcade of impropriety, a conflictual heart that does not abate, shifting, carrying through, always right at, lost in the throng of the fallen.

Decision not against, but always alongside: decision with the convocation of the fallen. The improper right through it all. No longer a throw, a fall then an elevation; no longer distraction then a properness of calling. Just a decision right in the midst of the fallen.

Stripped of its propriety decision takes on an altered form. No longer in distinction from the improper, decision passes the improper to the realm of the question of existence. Carrying into the most proper the imparting character of elsewhere. Carrying too the very accident of birth and its undecidedness, its passing on of the obligation of *da* through a compact of the fallen.

Grasp of the sense of Being always co-implicates an elsewhere. This grasp is the properness of the engagement of existence with the transitive modality of existence itself. A pressure from the improper throng of the fallen exposing that which is most proprietary to an elsewhere that stakes out the contours of a relation shared, an impartation in part obliged to another.

The most proper disposition of *Dasein* is found in the elsewhere imparted *da*, the tremor that instantiates the transitive quality of existence. *Dasein* poses from the very start of its existence an obligation to accept the gift of its ownmost impartation from elsewhere. The improper right at the heart of its most proper possibility.

Conflicted *da*, intimate correspondence, indicates the very motion of decision. Existence as *da*, the grasp of possibility, places the improper right in the midst of the most proper possibility of *Dasein*.

Commingled *da* not to be disentangled. The conflictual passage that imparts *da* is not a negative form of *da* befallen upon through condemnation, inadequacy or exile. Rather the compact of the fallen is the only possible formation of *da*. Thus the propering of possibility at the heart of *Dasein* comes only in and with the engagement of the *da* imparted from elsewhere, is only each time a taking-on of the proper.

The action of propering is thus always engaged within the throng of the world. Amidst the clamour of the fallen, the propering gesture is each and every time, in every place, taking place. Thus the question of a properness of vision comes only through and within the texture of the fallen rather than stood out against. The ownmost possibility of *Dasein* is its propering of the possible within the world. Any call to the properness of this possibility is always a call that comes from within the clamorous and noisy space of the fallen. Great discursive conflicts, the vibrant and compulsive noise of the world, the overflow of information and connection, all constitute various channels of fallen ingress. Transiting the cramped space of the right-at, passages form then inflect.

Call from throng is not an elevating prompt, but rather an unfolding of a deeper immersion in the fallen. The call is akin to an harmonic overtone, picking up the initial tremor of the improper and carrying it through into a different register. The call, a

summons from the past that brings the improper to the very heart of the projected possibilities most proper to *Dasein*.

The notion of an elevation from the mendacity of the fallen and thronging is a responsive effraction, a paroxysm of properness that refutes the impartive tremble of the improper. Properness thus understood as a contrived authenticity plays out a series of denials aimed at restricting the proper to a privilege of being founded in a relation to comprehending Being. It is a call of distinction that betrays the very indistinction of Being. The most proper understanding of propriety is an understanding through which the improper stains the proper. It is a grasp of the proper as in the midst of the fallen throng, an existence right at the elsewhere of the fallen, packed tight, cramped and always in a proximity that could be called a world.

A life lived through ecstatic projection. A grasping of the possible borne from the improper. Each time a life lived within the already elsewhere-imparted, within a lineage of impartation that is always conjoined to more than one. Even in the most miraculous of begettings, the strike of the blade as a parodic impartation, still a more-than-one origination of the tremble; the group, the blade, the ages-old strike of lightning: a great tableau of conflicting, affecting gestures that build the complex knot of the accident of impartation.

Right at the heart of existence, *Dasein*'s comportment towards Being, is the conflicted *da* imparted from elsewhere. Right at the heart of the comportment is the motion of the improper itself. An exscribed motivation, the improper subtends all modalities of *Dasein*.

Before all else *Dasein* is posed in a relation to an elsewhere, thrown into a world already carrying the imparting tremble from elsewhere. Existence has a vibrato quality, a mournful oscillation between the proper and the improper that adds a

strange, questioning quality to *Dasein*. A preoccupation with the resonance with elsewhere prompts such interrogation, a background musicality that rings and commands quiet attention.

Acéphale, the tremulous carried through into a perverse figure, is capable only of the improper. In the sacrificial scene all such possibilities played out, with the blade a surrogate of the improper at work in impartation. Acéphale through and through the improper exorbitantly. No regard for the clamour of the group witnessing, no regard for contortions of ecstatic bodies in spilt night, Acéphale ascends to the heavens because Acéphale is intensively improper. Missing head, heart excised, intestines exposed, all salutary improperness. The refusal of the face, of speaking, listening, the refusal of the right-at quality of the heart, the tremble of existence finding rhythm in the cavity of the chest: all improper. Burning heart offered up as symbol of Acéphale in distinction from the proper ecstasies of the group: a pulsating impartation once guarded in intimate proximity now exposed. Acéphale has no option but to leave the world of impartation, the world of the rhapsodic counterpoint of the proper and the improper.



*Blade strikes hilt deep into earth. A planetary incision. No longer tectonic rupture, surface interplay of plates related. Strike right into the heart. Core met with blade, pioneer of incision. Tip parts. Deep all the way. Resistance refuted by inquisition of incising point. Right through, blade stab sets tremors in resonant overlap.*

*Shock.*

*Shock.*

*Building slowly and intensely until a great roar. Frenetic waves clamour, building to crashing crescendo. Thunderclap of gods struck down in a terrible explosion.*

*Blasted apart.*

*All undone.*

*Ground in pieces. Detritus, nothing more.*

*Tremble shatters, great cataclysm.*

# Myth

## *Sacrifice*

We know the scene: there is a gathering, and someone lies supine over a lightning-scarred tree stump. We do not yet know whether the people gathered together form an assembly, if they are horde or a tribe. But we call them brothers and sisters because they are gathered together and because they are observing the same scene of sacrificial offering.

We do not yet know whether the one to be sacrificed is from among them or if he is an outsider. We say that he is one of them, but different from them because he has been chosen, or simply has the right – or else it is his duty – to be offered for sacrifice.

They were not assembled like this before the offering; the promise of sacrifice has gathered them together. Before, they were dispersed (at least this is what the story tells us at times), shoulder to shoulder, working with and confronting one another without recognising one another. But one day, one of them stood still, or perhaps he turned up, as though returning from a long absence or a mysterious exile. He stopped at a particular place in view of the others, by a tree that had been felled by lightning, and he lay down across the stump and began the offering that brought together the others.

Blade into heart.

Head, cut off.

So the story goes.

## *Story*

Some time past, a lightning bolt struck down from the heavens. Meeting a great oak, the bolt joined the celestial and the terrestrial in one incisive moment. A second later, from the sheer force of conjoining, the tree collapsed. Left was a scarred stump with roots buried deep, nourished by the subterranean brimstone that surged under the earth's mantle.

Later, a group of figures quietly assembled. One by one they encircled the stump at the centre of the clearing. The group waited, silent and motionless until a single figure stepped slowly to the centre of the clearing. The figure stopped and lay down backwards over the stump. Eyes stared intently to the empty heavens above. Body spread across stump, a moment of resonance, as if time knotted, bent back upon itself. Standing tree and supine body linked through the empty heavens.

Figures stepped out from the forest canopy into the clearing isolated under celestial arc. Overlapped times endured. All the while silent circle enclosed more tightly around the stump. Closer the bodies moved until knotted together and almost indistinct. Then, another figure stepped forward from the circle and stood next to the awaiting-supine. A blade drawn then raised high above the head, starlight reflections scattered.

Time slowed.

Hard. Abstract. Puncture. Blade into heart. Incision opened. Time caught out. Body convulsed. Flesh rent. Spill.

Darkness spread, time distended.

They say everything stopped but a terrible laughter.

Later, darkness cleared.

A body, slumped over the stump. Hole in the chest. Decapitated. Head on forest floor, solemn and troubling; blade nearby, still catching heavenly illumination.

The clearing was calm and silent, unnerving around terrible scene. The air was thick, silence not pure and still but muffled and oppressive.

Body slumped. A great collision of worlds. Knotted time returned. World through world, overlappings tumbled. Superimposition: the light, the heavens, the earth, the tree, the roots, the brimstone, the body, the offering, the blade, the incision, the spilt night, the head removed. All knotted together at that moment in single figure of body slumped over lightning-scarred tree stump.

A twitch.

Up. Vertical. Rigid.

Out of the great knot of time body stood. A long look surveyed the clearing, slow circulation followed by a gaze deep into the heavens above. Then, as if knowing, body moved one way then the other gathering the head, then the blade, from the forest floor.

Body sat back down on the stump. A slow, methodical scraping began. Blade cleared the living remnants from skull. Once finished, skull affixed to the groin: a substituted outward glare.

Then stood, blade incised stomach. Right around the cutting went, until a hole opened and the intestines were exposed to celestial illumination.

The hand was plunged deep into the stabbed hole in the chest. Out came the heart, wrenched in a fist, flaming.

A long reach upwards with blade. Two stars sliced from the sky dropped to the clearing, scattering heavenly light. Then picked up and attached to the chest, one over each nipple.

A moments pause.

Magisterial!

“Behold Acéphale!” a chorus of voices proclaimed. Clamour erupted from heart of clearing as body arises.

Defiant stance: legs splayed, arms spread, head cut off.

Figure emerged from darkness, bearing sacrificial traits with a perverse stoicism. Head missing, just a stump of neck remained. Outcome of brutal chop. In the left hand was a blade, in the right a flaming heart. The sacrificial blade held tight. The eternal burning of the life force clenched too. Two polarities, the collision of which opened the life that held them spread apart. Defiant Acéphale borne from clashing. On the chest two astral emissaries, one over each nipple. Sliced from the skies and let fall freely to the earth. Dead stars held fast to body, bearing witness no longer from above but condemned to terra below.

Incised in the stomach, a hole. A knotted splay of intestines glistened. Ruminations exposed. Digestive tracts continued material conversion into simple excess.

Scraped-clean skull fused onto groin. Hollow eyes stared out. Dead looking for immortal body. Head repositioned centrally, a more stable anchor for seat of looking. Brain cleared out, but empty head looked all the more intently.

Up, up into heavens Acéphale went. Ever skyward ascent from earth to mythic skies. Heavens rent, then swallowed whole. Acéphale ascended, then disappeared into

heavenly abyss. Soon returned the placid night skies, littered with celestial bodies: calm vision of furious energy.

Thundering into the celestial, Acéphale roamed over furious volcanoes and tectonic shearings that spewed forth the burning heart of the world.

A rest, to take stock. Seated atop volcanic ridge, Acéphale waited. The blade, dropped to the ground. A foot placed either end, at the hilt and at the tip. Flaming heart held out in front of chest. Offered, the interminable burning.

Great clamour all around. Explosive resonance of volcanic eruptions. Ground shook, great palls of ashen smoke billowed forth, rocks were spat into skies, laval flows descended from mountainous heights to fill valley below. Acéphale sat calm, meditative, waiting.

Amongst the raucous sound came a voice, resonant in the valleys, emerging as if from the subterranean explosions themselves.

*“Le glaive, c’est la passerelle”*

The blade, the passage. Between one foot and another, between one world and another. Hardened tool, chaotic spilling.

Acéphale waited.

Up, Acéphale stood. Imperious above the mountains and valleys below. A towering presence. Blade gathered back into left hand, heart clenched tightly in the right once again.

Acéphale placed right leg on mountain top, then swiftly stood and brought whole body onto elevation. Balanced on right leg, rigid and unmoving, Acéphale tipped to the right, arms still spread wide. Left leg held out to one side, lost amongst the dark clouds that ascended from the valley below.

Held. Immobile. A stark vision. With god-like bearing, Acéphale towered. From below: adulation, worship. Monumental Acéphale waited.

A sudden leap. Furious and powerful. Acéphale soared in flight. High above the peaks and valleys below, Acéphale ascended higher and higher still. Up further into the skies until flying freely amongst celestial vortices. The heart and the blade pioneered aerial course, terrible conjunction tracing venture through skies.

Down, down, a frantic descent. Acéphale landed amongst torrid seas. Storms ravaged whilst Acéphale began to stride once again. Great, sprawling steps carried Acéphale across the waves. The blazing heart was held aloft, burning more brightly below dark skies.

Weak sun, timid above the horizon, looked down to tempestuous seas as Acéphale strode past. Then, steps quickened as Acéphale marched through all-encompassing storms. On and on, indifferent to the chaos unleashed all around. From seas to land, Acéphale continued thunderous romp. On and on.

Acéphale halted. Looming darkness behind spilt from skies to earth below. Great torrents of encapsulating shadow spilt. A temple, shining oracular beacon, towered high behind Acéphale. Sole illumination in engulfing dark.

Acéphale stopped and crouched down onto right knee. Form changed, things acquired. In the crook of the right arm was a crumbling pillar. Temple column stolen away. Remnant recovered, pulled into new world by striding Acéphale.

The blade remained the same: held in the right hand and forced into the chest once again. A new puncture. A spilling forth once more.

The heart had changed: in the left hand a grape vine. Coiled around the left leg and reaching for the vine was a snake.

The skull with once relentless frozen stare, sprouted snakes from denuded bone. A writhing cranial halo. Medusa head sprawled, stared with new-found potency.

Night engulfed all. Acéphale disappeared from view.

A new head!

Acéphale charged out the darkness once again.

Bullhead fused onto neck, no longer stump or human protrusion. Charge cleared night, an orgy of bodies revealed. Humans and animals interlocked. Arms, legs, teeth, claws, horns. Flesh and limbs knotted. Great chaos in the wake of onward conquest. The blade, held aloft in the left hand, incised the dark skies and illuminated the way. A crystalline puncture, held above the fray. In the right hand the grape vine trailed, fertilising chaos as drawn through writhing bodies. Dead eyes stared ahead still.

Acéphale charged faster and faster. Chaos of bodies intensified and multiplied. Troubling hybrids appeared amidst the frenzy. Volcanoes erupted wildly. Great clouds built and still the weak sun looked on whilst Acéphale stood imperious.

One head became two. Acéphale stared ahead to the future and behind at the destructive wake. Flaming heart burnt fiercely in the left hand whilst the blade was held out behind with the right. Grape vines grew from lower limbs and tendrils spread amongst the knotted bodies. Skull held continuous stare. Intestines became more knotted in the stomach, tightening within the cut hole. Behind, temple predominant, set apart from the maelstrom below by a heavenly grace.

Quicker, quicker, quicker, Acéphale marched through all. Night engulfed once more.

All dark.



Later, night cleared. All calm. All gone but the continuous burning of bullhead cut down to the ground. A skull locked between the horns stared forth, eyes fixed. Bullhead stared too, right out into the future. Acéphale, head removed once more, off into other realms.

So the story goes.

## *Cycle*

Round once more. Then again. Indefinitely.

So the story goes.

The journey, the meeting, the sacrifice, Acéphale arises. Story told and retold through furtive exchanges. Fabular refinement: he died, he rose again. So the story was born.

Blade plunged into the heart, the head cut right off. The story told and retold is the story of this death and this arising (we knew the scene, each one of us, as we gathered and he told us). The mysteries come from here: the night that spills and engulfs, the flaming heart that never ceases, the sacrificial blade recovered and held covetously.

Killing blow renders night dark. Out of the darkness Acéphale arises and begins celestial ascent. Then Acéphale roams. Marching through the heavens until the whole story begins once more with another blow that separates head from body.

All begins from a crude ceremony, in the heart of a forest where lightning once struck down a mighty oak. Around this strange locus a group silently gathers. Setting out to re-work the world through a great act of barbarity. Ceremony, little rigour, no circumstance. Just the stark night of the forest and the sidereal witnesses on high. Heavens empty, vacated by the gods some time ago. A great cosmological dance all that remains.

The offering lies across the stump. The blade is plunged deep into the chest. Darkness spills from corporeal laceration and occludes the clearing. Night engulfs all. The stars, the moon: occluded. All light lost in dark void that opens into night of the clearing. Silence, before terse and light, now heavy and thick. Bodies are convulsed in ecstasy, tumbling and riven with laughter. Great cries of anguish force mouths agape

and heads backwards, joyous cries too follow the same pattern. Bodies flail and contort, crashing into and through one another. Limbs tangle, separate, strike and fall limp. Exhaustion grabs, but bodies still contort. Spasmodic, tumbling, collapsing. Wave after wave of jarring motion. Ecstasy continues whilst spilt night persists. A long waiting. Exhaustion staved off. Darkness, energising agitant.

Spilt night clears to reveal a head and blade discarded.

A sacrifice in a world without wonder or celestial witness: incongruous act, simple absurdity. But a sacrifice proposed, a sacrifice performed. The blade into the heart then the head cut off. Spilt darkness and ecstatic convulsions.

So much incongruity in this world when the heavens are mapped with orbital pathways where once the gods stalked, looking down with judgment, with care. Once demanding offerings, testing faith, playing games. Now no longer distant presences, just great vacuum and circling matter. On and on and on.

To plunge a blade into the heart under empty skies is a hollow gesture. Indecipherable, without purpose. Where once a bolt of lightning felled an almighty oak, a message from the gods, the earth was joined in the briefest of instants to the celestial, the skies linked to the earth and the heavenly asserted its almighty power. The instant struck down the lasting. A moment of pure caprice. Lightning no longer strikes from a heavenly presence. The sacrifice made on ground once bearing witness to what is now lost. Under empty heavens a life taken.

Darkness spills as a confounded spiritual offering. The ceremony doesn't work and the laceration blots out the world for a moment: time to rejoice in waste, to rejoice in a moment thought lost. The sacrifice, not for appeasement, not a test of faith, just an offering of excess. In a world of empty skies absurdity starkly rendered by killing strike. Life taken without end. Life taken to tell of life taken. A sacrifice made for the

sacred. A provocation of an absence. A sacrifice to dis-articulate the world that no longer needs it. The unnecessary become incongruous, unleashed into a world that no longer even recognises its absence.

Blade plunges, and as an embattled scream jolts the world. Darkness spills and floods the clearing. All lost.

A sacrifice offered to the profane in the name of the lost. Pure waste of offering, given to a world that can't accommodate such an excess. A life that cannot be reckoned, exposing everything. The edges, the geometries, the similitudes, all occluded by spilt night. All scuffed, separated and deformed by the spilling that disturbs the measured.

Left on the clearing floor, a troubling conjunction: highest extremity on boggy ground. Great symbol of the profane debased during the dark spill. The horror of the head cleaved from body propagates the absurd. The terrible event spreads through a barbaric image and a symbolic provocation: off with his head!

Whispered, composed, told and retold, such is the story of sacrifice: circling, disposed without clear origination. A story released into the world.

Story travels throughout a world where stories are lost, drawn helplessly into a great swell of confused telling. Stories proliferate wildly, but this story punctures through the barrage with a troubling clarity: night spilt, head cut off.

The story tells of an offering addressed to empty skies. A futile, maniacal act. Out of place. Totally out of time. Strange rendition of archaism in the present world.

World of the sacrifice, world of myth become transparent. Stories of a great cosmological intrigue dissipate over millennia of retelling. No longer do the heavens and the earth intersperse. No longer does a furious bolt from on high strike down in

judgment. Stories abate, other stories come, and somewhere the great mythic structure is lost.

Sacrifice offered, the residue of a heavenly intervention overlaid with a desperate earthly strike. Two worlds, folded one through another. The sacrificial ritual and the world of myth come to a high-point of intersection when the blade lacerates flesh where once the lightning bolt lacerated the world below. Under dark canopy once resplendent stories find new life. In the forest, myth re-articulated.

One story told anew draws in a whole history of stories, inscribing a series into the present world. Sacrifice seeks to re-join and open out this series of old worlds within the new. The ghostly legacy of the strike provides an articulation: worlds conjoined. Ritual invokes a memory, the resurgent brilliance of long-forgotten relations between the heavens and the earth.

Sacrifice, a vortex. An irresistible pull established at the centre of the forest clearing: the offering, the lightning, the killing blade, the ritual participants crash together. Worlds hewn open then recomposed. Parts collapse into parts. Sacrificial offering, great agitator. Furious energy of collision causes worlds to tumble, and at the heart of the story retold is just this rapacious vortex. Conflict with disregard for provenance, impropriety chaos. Night spills to mask the commotion, to mask world collisions.

All parts pulled in. The story re-articulates and tells again. A gyroscopic quality, circulating parts in circulating parts. Each re-telling a moment of circulation in stasis. Captured instant, novel configuration. This part in proximity, that part occluded; then the distant seen clearly and the close obfuscated. An each time, every time of the story. Incessant recomposition.

Story circulates amongst other stories. All pulled in. A great confusion. Yet a clarity, an incision of a different kind: the fury of a continuous compounding at the heart of a telling.

The world of stories is just the world of stories. A great schism separates the stories from celestial permanence. The lightning strike of time past no longer comes from the heavens. A simple event, aleatory and devoid of meaning. No longer stories of divinity, no longer stories of origination. Only stories that tell stories of the absence of stories. Schism relayed throughout: a divide at the heart of the world.

Then with the strike of a blade, a sacrificial story enters the world of circulating tales. A vortex at its centre, the story indetermines. Pulling in, circulating the parts of the stories that propose the no longer present heavens. The gods are dead; the bolt is just a bolt and nothing more. The sacrificial story destabilises these re-tellings, but not as evidence of something lost. The sacrificial story is not a re-origination of the mythic. It is not the return of myth at the heart of the clearing then suffused throughout the world with a continually turning story. Rather the sacrificial story disorganises the world of stories that tell of the absence of stories. Those stories that proclaim a freedom from the mythic past of the story, from those great tales of origination, are rendered confusing when exposed to the disorganising pull of the sacrificial story.

One more story.

One more myth.

The story of the absence of story tells and re-tells just the same thing its narration claims to dissipate. The clarity of the sacrificial story cuts right to the heart of this complication. The whole lot furled upon itself is sliced straight through and the obfuscation at the centre spills out.

The sacrificial story is not a new story, just a dispelling story. A story that disorganises the observation of the absence of story.

Just one more story amongst many stories. Disruptive, but just one more. The absence of story just another story told to fill the absence. The sacrificial story circulates, is pulled into the world as a different observation: our great story is the story of the absence of story.

What's groped for in this story is a manner of handling the story of the absence of story itself.

A sacrifice enacted then a story told. A myth re-invigorated, folded into new stories. A story that speaks of a condition of absence whilst furiously circulating around and amongst itself. The gyroscopic action pulling and destabilising the central nexus. The killing blade, the lightning strike, overlap and crash together. No longer clear origination but a gap of conflict opening at the heart of the re-told story. The disorganisational motion of the sacrificial story confounds. A simple telling of a new story about the absence of stories appears itself as mythic.

No longer myth of absence of myth, the sacrificial story offers testimony in another mode: story and its work is foregrounded. Vacillating, unsure, the sacrificial story hesitates and confuses this mythic proclamation. The stories tell of absence of stories, but the stories are told on a different ground around differing themes. Not constituting a new mythology for a new world absent of myth, rather the sacrificial story tells the story of an interruption: myth held wide open. Split apart in a world where stories no longer carry the force of divine origination. Split by the empty offering of a sacrifice that disorganises and confounds the work of myth.

Held open, the story of sacrifice circulates. Constant disarticulation at centre, the vortex pulls in and throws out. A profound instability held at the heart of a simple tale: a meeting in the forest, a blade plunged into the chest, night spilling, interrupting.

In a world without myth, sacrifice under empty skies does nothing but interrupt. The story of the sacrifice just one more interjection resonating, a constantly voiced interruption.

Night spilling from laceration works outwards from the conflictual gap at the heart of the clearing. Gap forms the heart of story, the centre from which interruption spills. Night visibly interrupts and undoes. When night clears the head is missing. A crystallisation of the chaotic infractions of spilt night, just one more interruptive gesture knotted into the conflictual space.

The first part of the ritual ends. Interruption opens. The absence of myth no longer mythic itself, but pulled into an interruption posed in the sacrifice. Absence of myth distended so as to hold the infinite regression of the mythic at bay. Interruption stalls the work of myth, in the gap the sacrificial story becomes predominant.

Story can be told and retold. The chaotic vortex at the centre unworking in perpetuity. This functions well enough for the world of the sacrifice, but in the conflictual space of the sacrifice itself only one world sees these implications unfold: the storied world absent of myth. The operational procedure at the heart of it all comes from the story set free, the instability of the conflict interrupting.

The sacrifice occurs and the storied world of absent myth is held open. The initial gesture performs all it needs. But this misses the very point of the sacrifice, the summation of which is heard in the resounding clarity of the words “Behold Acéphale!”



*Up*

At the heart of the clearing body supine over tree stump. Lightning strikes. Blade lacerates. All happens lost in continuous present. Times folded together. Body remains placid amongst the chaos of the complicated time. (Hard to tell what's occurring).

Indefinite waiting.

Acéphale arises, recomposes body from left over parts, wanders off into the darkness of the forest.

Chaotic production from a ritual purporting to be without ends. Out of the great laceration comes headless being. A creation begotten to the world from sacrificial blow. Brought forth not as produced end, but rather a begetting unworking ends. Offering allayed into a figure, then set free unto the world. A figure caught as interruption, death corrupted as headless being arises.

Exilic wander carries Acéphale far: through times and through worlds. Released from an enfolding of worlds Acéphale is free to roam between one world and another. So it is that Acéphale leaps into the celestial, appropriates the heavenly, storms through the mythic.

Mountains and valleys. Violent volcanic eruptions. Smoke. Clouds of ash. Hails of rock blasted high. Furious storms. Aggravated seas. Skies filled with spiral of stars and pools of darkness. Acéphale wanders through all: inflecting, gathering, distributing.

On, from valleys and seas into mythic realms. All together, enfolded: the worlds of Dionysos, Medusa, the Minotaur, worlds of oracles, temples, raging battles and human-animal hybrids. Towards the end, a head regained.

Another chop. Head cut off. Acéphale disappears. Remnant left in one world whilst venturing into another.

Cycle begins again.

Acéphale arises from sacrificial death. An offering, right at the heart of the conflict of worlds. The sacrificial act and the sacrificial story spill out into the storied world of absent myth. Borne from a conflictual space, the act and the story have a counterpart that runs in the opposite direction. The sacrifice moves from the event ever-forward. Myth interrupted, held open. But only half the work is done. Myth has a trans-historical character that persists. The interruption can only hold open the current absence of myth.

Acéphale arises then marches off into mythic realms. Wandering Acéphale inverts the work of the sacrificial story. Journeying into the mythic, Acéphale destabilises and disorganises the stories of origination. So it is that Acéphale is seen storming chaotically through scenes. Mythic components picked up and taken apart, appropriated and de-appropriated, stolen, confounded, slurred together. Acéphale, interruption embodied. A regressive interference re-working foundations.

Acéphale takes on the grape vine of Dionysos, whilst clutching tight a column from a temple collapsed by Dionysos's fury. The skull of the decapitated head grows snakes and takes on the Gorgonic death stare. Bullhead is grafted onto neck. Bodies writhe and morph in debauched festivity. More heads grow, vines sprout from body, orgies intensify. All scenes confounded, clashed through ceaseless wander. Acéphale, a disorganisational vortex in the indefinite past of myth. Interruption in another world, all made possible from confounded begetting. Acéphale, a sacrificial arising that halts all processes. Sacrifice held, death held, myth held. At the heart of it all is a story

interposing and holding open. At the heart of it all is a vortex held in a common but mutable form. Disorganisation has an approximate figure, its name is Acéphale.

Out of the conflict of strikes landing across time, night spills and bodies are lost in ecstatic contortions. Drawn into the conflictual space, bodies encounter other bodies in spilt night. Apportioned between worlds bodies are lost momentarily, themselves interrupted. No longer fully engaged in the storied world of absent myth, sacrificial participants are pulled into a world interrupted, a world without the common clamour for either a new myth or the myth of the absence of myth. Sacrificial participants are cast into a world caught between the twin interruptions of the work of myth held wide open, and the scenes of the mythic disorganised within themselves. Witnessed is a sacrificial death held in suspension, the unfolding of a story of interruption. In both cases, worked components of community are suspended on a precipice of inactivity. The ecstasy of the spilt night plays through these two modes: a death stuck on a limit, a story to be shared interrupted. Sacrifice at the heart of it all.

Shared story stopped right in the middle. Mouth held agape. A stupefying stare as conflicting worlds confound narration. A story supposed to be shared in common, even a story of the absence of, but incomplete and held wide open.

The gesture begetting Acéphale interrupts all work and holds all in silence. The sacrifice not just hollow re-inscription of the sacred, but principle of revolution. A minor action in a world that has forgotten the potency of the offering. On this premise, a body lays down over the tree stump, waiting as offering of pure excess. Eyes staring into the heavens, deep looking without reciprocal recognition. Sacrificial offering waits, poised between two limits: the conflictual strike and death interrupted.

The blade plunges into the chest. Group sees the terrible act, sees the night spill from the laceration before darkness swallows all. In the dark the sacrifice passes. In the dark the head is cut off. Excessive death. Wasteful spill of life.

Death rends. Group are engulfed in dark night as life passes. Life thrown right up against a limit, up to a limit point of thinking but no farther. Death spills, limit spills. From laceration of body comes limit. A darkness over all, masking, stifling. An ungraspable limit engaging a mechanism of completion. From one limit to another: the span of a life. Incomprehensible edges held, clutched delicately in the palm of the hand. Ineffable. Weightless almost. Caught in a great contradiction, a moment of confoundment clashing with a moment of blistering clarity. Two limits of a life wavering here or there.

A limit pressed up against, before disappearing beyond in the aftermath of the strike of the blade. Group follows to this limit before night fully takes hold.

Night clears, limit retrenched: grasped as unsurpassable outside.

All fine, until body arises. Back up to feet. Invigorated. Imperious.

Acéphale stands, topology of death reconfigured as complex knot: tied up, looped around and pulled back through. Limit cracks when pushed right into the heart of life. Great complexity of arising shatters.

Enclosure of ineffable limit, once assured in sacrificial offering, is turned around and undone. The re-invigorated sacred begins to disorganise worldly forms. Spreading back into the ritual, then further into the world. Experiences, thoughts, re-inflected. Angles change, lighting shifts, purposes are re-configured. The intractable marches back through the whole scenario, further even, back into the whole world,

disassembling and contorting. Conflict of worlds, strike and blade, embodied in the relentless march of Acéphale. On and on and on.

Acéphale stands. In an instant limits of a life fully undone. The offering no longer a death to inaugurate a new world of myth, a new world of the sacred re-invigorated. The sacrifice undoes these propositions the very moment body arises. The first jolt sends the whole world tumbling, spiralling quickly into the vortex set loose by conflicting worlds. No longer a death for group, no longer a death for anything at all except the simple waste of a life. Death, confounding of limits, no longer apports common experience. The outside edge of a life, its principle of completion, transformed into a modulation from one life to something other. Generated from the conflict, the modulation now working amongst worlds undoing limits voraciously. The disorganisational proclivities of Acéphale borne from topological abnormality.

The strike of the blade: life incompleting. Flayed wide open, limits of life confounded problematise conceptions of the whole. Acéphale arises, finitude undone.

Mouth agape as story stutters. Arrhythmic enunciation. Staccato. Then slurred. Unclear narration leaves tale lost, interrupted. A circuitous, unfathomable end.

Story stumbles below the enormity of the vacated heavens, a crude puppetry on ground no longer hallowed. Correspondence to stories of old found only in the residue of the lightning bolt. A remainder spectacularly re-animated with a strike of the blade: abstract surrogate.

The story to be told and retold is the story of a sacrifice that corrupts death. The story to be told and retold is the story of an interruption. The story itself, destined to be told in a world of stories of the absence of story, stumbles across this absurdity. Stumbles so much as to leave the telling in disarray. This profound act interrupts death

and interrupts even its own narration. The story stuck in the throat no longer useful as a story of the miraculous, just a disruption that cannot bring stories back together. The sacrificial story, not the answer to the story of the absence of story, but rather a distension of absence until unresolvable. A wait continuous.

Absence of story persists, grappling with the remarkable sacrificial story that seems to reinvigorate the whole lot. Absent stories exposed to possibility of a new myth for the world. Exposed, without comprehension. Story not told, incomplete, thus unassimilable. Caught between a miraculous tale unable to be told, and a world wishing to translate the absence of the miraculous into a new story of the world vacated by the illimitable, ungraspable.

Interrupted both, held wide open. Mouth agape as body arises. Right at the heart of the sacrificial offering lies the interruption that replicates itself in multiple directions: death, the story, the mythic world. Interruption cascades, virus-like replication of a disorganising mode. A mode unworking.

Story incapable of completion, disrupting completion otherwise. Story capable of elaboration, embellishment, retelling, capable of being transmitted in the usual manner through the usual channels. But at some point stuck in the throat. A stutter. Trailing off. Abrupt halt. An interjection. A world absent of stories, confounded: but arisen again under empty skies!

Telling and retelling of the story of an origin, now interrupted. A stuck origination. Telling and retelling circling, speaking origination slips. Stories falter.

Assembled around an offering, to see the enactment of a story destined to be retold, the events witnessed disrupt and the group are swallowed up: contorted then dispersed to tell a story no longer capable of clear articulation. Unworked all.

Disorganised by the sacrifice, the fullness of a speech of origination undone. Speaking fully of myth, a speech full of myth. Sacrifice disturbed, interrupted. Totality opened up as stories are stumbled through and the dead get back up. At the heart of these concatenated communities, the sacrificial assembly and the shared world of the story, is the continuous interruption that breaks apart completion. Incompletion of sacrifice, incompletion of story.

Death: invaginated, interrupted.

Full speaking of myth incompleting from within.

Work of completion held.

Communities concatenated.

To tell the story of origination is to get stuck, stumbling over the words, the events, the ordering. Rudimentary narration allayed. Story put to one side and origination held up. Left in tatters, abandoned as lost relic. In place nothing but interruption of tales told. Communities shared around interruption, communities shared around tales told that always stutter, break apart. Interruption, always disorganising, always unworking.

Sacrifice unleashes passages of interruption, freed to work through worlds. The event of the sacrifice, an antecedent resistance to works of myth operationalised: gassed bodies piled, bulldozed into holes.

Myth work yet to come to fullest completion, but in sacrifice a terrible foreboding. The savagery of the head cut off, an excess of violence set out in opposition to a stark, operationalised violence that is but to come. Right at the heart of it all, myth.

# Nancy

## OBELISK

From the north, heading south, a figure enters the public square. Steps traverse stacked geometries delineating space. Cutting straight across an imaginary edge, the figure enters between two headless statues. Unerringly central, the wandering trajectory described cuts perpendicularly across the line joining the two statues, as if motion driven by an invisible and precise motor force. Statues observe: headless but implacable witnessing.

Crunches underfoot break early-morning silence with an irregular series of interludes. Sound scatters across flat plane. Volatile, slick surface resonates.

Debris obligates foot to move; errancy creeps into previously implacable step and the straight-line course veers as obstacles are met.

Viewed from above, the trajectory comes to describe a series of stuttered lineaments. Feathered together when viewing distance is great enough, the lines map an arcing, continually corrected trajectory.

Below, at the surface, minor corrections and continual adjustments keep the trajectory on course, helped all the time by a resolute stare locked onto the base of obelisk.

Sounds scatter all the while. Cascades build, resonances overlap. The occasional dull thud of a kick or the quick patter of a stumble add textural variations to the repeat sharp crunch.

Trajectory continues, and before long a whole symphony plays out across the public square. Solitary witness enjoins reciprocally, a wry smile across the face. A shame, however, that this single point tracing a solitary course cannot shift position to appreciate the variations as they play out throughout this now grand concert hall. A



performance attended only by the resolute headless statues: implacable concretions, vigilant, incapable of hearing.

Stepped path conducts sound and progress. Central obelisk lures, complicit in compositional play.

Stop.

Figure stood, stock-still.

Resonance continues, *diminuendo*.

Silence returns, emptying the square once more. Apposite state for witnessing statues.

Figure arcs head down, supplicant below obelisk. Long shadow spans stacked geometries. A cool, darkening delineation provides tonal relief from otherwise monotonal plane. Resolute looking shifts axis from obelisk-bound horizontal to a vertical inquisition that scrutinises a small brass plaque. Polished centre clouds into tarnished perimeter, outcome of habitual routine that works only the necessary. Engraved text retains warm glow of polished surface, only the extremities of the engraved phrase losing some lustre and force in the slow encroach of tarnish. An elongated scan scrutinises the inscription: MONUMENT TO BATAILLE.

The gaze takes unnervingly long, too long for a simple reading. Eyes scan slowly left to right, each letter a delicacy. Meticulous looking is drawn out over time. Head still bowed; shadow still cast.

Pale translucence of grey morning colours plaque.

Head thrown up, back arced throat taut eyes staring into skies. Jarring transition searches for reflection's source.

Above skies circle.

Span dominates upward looking. The changing focus and angle of the gaze follow a clearly described arc, moving from inlaid plaque along a straight line that cuts across the square to the base of obelisk, then an upwards rise as gaze moves towards expected pinnacle.

Jut met instead.

Gaze gets lost momentarily. No focus, ambition forgotten. Frenzied looking overtakes as gaze comes face to face with shattered pinnacle. Multiple fragments split single grand upwards gesture into many tiny flails up. Celestial ambition thwarted by diffuse channel: no longer clear concentration. Expectancy of obelisk pinnacle meets disappointment. Frantic search for guidance ensues. Eyes dart, flirting with each tiny upwards point as the possibility of clear direction. Yet no such assurance is forthcoming and instead the frenzied look continues without orientation. Points all look the same to frantic gaze. Unable to recall each and every failed ambition, vision circles around a seemingly infinite number of promises that continue to proliferate. A rapid spread, each failure produces more chimerical miscreants taking pleasure in the diversions and disappointments of an eager gaze.

Looking goes on with feet firmly rooted until a violent snap sends the head arcing all the way back, resigned to find its own method of elevation with celestial promise of obelisk exhausted. Open wide, eyes glare into span of skies. Slow sweeping looks move across the seemingly taut surface of the arc above. Clouds, patches of blue-grey morning illumination, trajectories of bird flight, all appear as if flattened across single plane. A chaotically composed inversion of the planar geometry below. Incomprehensible masses of depth get lost, disposed of in the contorted fixed-point observation of the arced neck.

Deep looking continues through contorted posture. Awkward configurations find best aspect: neck tilted, a twist of vertebrae, sideways glance.

Sky swallows vision whole.

Eyes implore.

No answers received. In inscrutable silence ceaseless activity plays out above. Complete indifference.

Gaze continues scan momentarily then stops, a swift action brings the head back down to the comfort of horizontal looking.

A pause.

Wander resumes. Stare locked once again to the horizontal plane. Eyes fixed firmly on obelisk ahead. Silence broken by the sound of steps and crunch of scattered debris underfoot.

Lure of obelisk continues its draw.

Trajectory meanders as before, directions determined by distribution of fragments. A path more or less straight, rarely deviating outside the shadow of obelisk cast down by the weak morning sun.

Eyes narrow, lock tight. What first appeared as a curious looking turns to obsessive focus. Wander takes on reverential form as proximity to obelisk increases. Head tips slightly to maintain a vision of obelisk stature. Steps slow until gait takes on the character of a somnambulistic wander.

Step by step distance decreases and attraction grows. Lure ever thicker. Draw heady and cloying as obelisk slowly nears. Rich intoxication grabs, weaving its way into the motor force of the legs. Head tips back further still, a painful contortion as distance continues to decrease. Gaze begins to lose fixed-point intensity and relaxes into a linger without concentration. A rich elixir, entreaties of obelisk grab and draw

in the wandering trajectory. Embodiment slips, maintaining the acute sensations of waking life but pulled into a powerful reverie. Magnetic draw pulls and pulls: irresistible force.

Climactic moment comes as final step brings obelisk face to face. Cool persistence of stone weighs heavy in the thick air of the confrontation. A momentous, shadowy presence erupts high. Field of vision filled as craned neck lowers to meet stone edifice at the human level. Inscriptions encircle, an intricate wrapping of exhortations. Light touch of language and the deftness of image meet incongruously with the chiselled-out permanence of stone. A tireless but delicate entreaty.

Arm raised reaches. Tentative fingers unfurl. Cold stone draws in. A timorous approach, the very tip of the first finger makes its way through the charged space between body and stone. Motion concentrates all energy into single exterior point of body. Heart, soul, brain, all focussed in tiny surface of reciprocity. The pulse, quickening in anticipation, animates and enlivens the tissue. The soul glides to the very point of the finger as if the pineal gland had rolled all the way down the arm and lodged itself in the fingertip. Intense focus knots whole body into tiny point making slow progress towards obelisk. Crescendo: fingertip meets obelisk.

Dissolution.

Mass of obelisk fills as body empties through finger. Body become stone-heavy in reciprocation.

Dead weight.

Time stops.

Enrapture. Deep intoxication folds mass and body together. One into and through the other. Meticulous folding, replications abound within creases, drawing deeply uneasy mirrorings of material together in elaborate dances of mimicry: stone-

heavy hand, deeply veined surface of obelisk throbs, skin pulled taut over bones firms to cold and refutive surface, stone slackens awaiting reciprocal living touch.

Body takes on monumental bearing, lifted high and looking down onto the square below. Obelisk loses implacable stance, wavering and hesitant stone shifts slightly, responsive to the gentle buffeting from light-touch of forces outside.

Body shared between. Caught out and stopped in transition at the point of touch. Charged space of initial reach contains intensity of anticipation. Dissolutive and disaffective moment between reduces body to a single concentrated point. Collapsed, held, then detonated. The moment opens a reciprocal touching, a reciprocal dissipation. Pressure distributes. All actions articulated through the responsive inquisitions of extended finger. Complete circuit, touch of stone renders exchange possible. Lure of obelisk draws in with this specific purpose. Somnambulism an outcome of lure pulling body to a point of concentration so focused that the remainder of fleshy-mass becomes mere embodiment. Sensorial dispositions all pulled into tenebrous reach of the first finger. Sight hearing taste smell touch coalesce. Each anticipative of stimulus, of a response to the very concentration of body. Such focus dispossesses all. Anticipation overwhelms and the discrete senses pool into a lump of possible interconnections.

Embodiment slows, eventually falls to sleep. Heightened concentration seduces, the pallid sleepless encapsulation of once sensorially-rich tissue trails behind, drawn along by the intensive bundle of body at fingertip. An intense, calculated dispossession empties out the once-alert full embodiment. Presupposed delimitation falters as a now guileless step continues the last few paces of the course begun from the edge of the square. Such diminution of vigour unanticipated at the start. The weak draw of obelisk a curiosity, an interest intended to be met. Wander a purposeful

journey, but the elusive rapture of the promise of obelisk compromised clear-headed approach. Instead an unerring trajectory established from one side of the square to the centre, drawn on and on by a celestial ambition assumed to be met in the gestures of obelisk.

Sedate wander maintains waking grace. Sure steps belie slumber. Somnambulistic character comes from reverential quality of progress. The slow, steady count of steps, the almost motionless body, the locked stare refusing to reflect.

The lure of obelisk measures out two disposessions. The search for an outside embodiment now celestial reach thwarted by rupture, and in the ever-steady forwards progress, the need to establish parameters of body through a reflexive exercise that pushes body outside.

A double reaffirmation of the body outside: the flexion and transposition of the body across taut span of nervous and supplicant flesh, but the body capable too of slipping from these bonds of slavish embodiment.

Body outside in vision's conquer of distance. Sound inflects and carries body into great landscapes of events. Fragrance knots body to the ineffable. Taste crashes distant worlds into a folded-up reciprocity. Touch inflects, dissolves.

Body scatters all over.

Obelisk, a great repository. Sediment of history collected and compressed over time. Stone monument bears witness, a silent complicity in many moments of bodies extended, dispossessed, mutilated, celebrated.

Body of stone responds to touch. Fingers leave accretions, inflect surface, erode the great timeless edifice. Obelisk seemingly impervious to human time, but the granular erosion of even the most gentle touch slowly transforms the body of stone too.

Reciprocities measure apprehensions of body's own distension and dispersal. Creases of bodies unfold, bounds loosen, suppositions are reformed. Charged spaces, as between finger and stone, present the power of reciprocal apprehension to distend body into intense and extreme forms of sensitivity. Heightened tensions inflect differently, changing modalities of engagement with the world. So it is that the somnambulistic wander can retain a rigidity and grace of step whilst in reverie. So it is that body appears as if in slumber whilst a highly charged exchange dances through the tip of a finger extended outwards.

Sensation coalesces at focal point, charged concentration re-distributes body to limit of fleshy fingertip. A whole new relation, a whole new world.

Transposition of body shifts orientation. Charged space between fingertip and obelisk draws body out: a new construction.

Finger reaches, obelisk ever-nears. Lapsing space between charged contacts slips into body, affiliates. Body extends beyond fleshy confines to incorporate the reciprocal touch of stone and the charged space of passage between stone and fingertip. Such re-orientation draws focus away from the remaining embodiment following in the wake of the outstretched fingertip.

Lure of obelisk pulls, reverie draws bodily centre out to extremity. Such slippage akin to sleep, a calming and a focus. Akin only in form however, an outside apparency that looks like slumber. Similar to the somnambulistic parallel, the calming and focus of body is not a passive enclosure, rather the slowing and transition of focus to a narrow point is an active concentration. Such a motion re-distributes body in a purposive manner that retains heightened awareness. Body only appears as if going to sleep because enrapture of obelisk draws attentions to a narrow point. Re-distribution of body follows form of sleeping, but here the slumber is a quality drawn out of the

reverential lure of obelisk. Drawn in, body is taken over by a vague promise. Lure has no words. Strange attraction predominates without clear rationale.

Narcosis of obelisk-promise takes over body: lure courses. Body traversed, pulled ever-forward. Slumber extends through rest of body meeting little resistance. Once bodily distribution re-focussed, remnants lose importance.

Intoxication becomes full enrapture the moment now concentrated body within fingertip meets stone surface. The explosive moment of contact sends shockwaves through both poised bodies. Tight focus in a single point suddenly released back into larger edifice. Intensity relaxed, full enrapture leaves body largely limp.

Force of event tips body backwards, reeling from explosive sensorial contact with stone face body begins to tumble. A slow inversion, head tips first with feet following later.

Then caught.

Stopped still mid tumble.

Held, action paused.

For a moment body simply stops.

Obelisk takes hold.

Tipped back, held, body slowly raised, arms fall limply either side, legs drift, bent at the knees. Slumbering body lifts off the ground. An improbable, ridiculous encounter.

Body now floats, held still a foot above the ground, facing obelisk from which backwards tumble began. Intoxication and strange force of obelisk hold body still as reverie controls.

Full enrapture dissolves limits. Body dispersed somewhere within strange interrelation of obelisk, lure, and floating embodiment.



Eyes limpid, a blank stare gazes up at skies, caught with a force of indecision parallel to the shattered top of obelisk. A flailing, inadequate reach above.

### *A gathering*

Lightning strikes, blade cuts, obelisk top shatters. Chops span time. Fury strikes down with vicious energy and with vicious enlightenment. The same chop of protuberance from the heavens, from the surface of the earth, from deep below the terra. The same gesture spans time, spans worlds: all linked through absence rent. Incompletion holds through strikes that cleave and separate lofty heights. Concentrations of vertical power topple into horizontal debasements, dropping and beginning to degrade. Becoming humus, the outcome of the strikes: tree rots, flesh teems, obelisk crumbles.

Span of resonance catches acts of stunning similitude. All events linked through times overlapped. Isomorphic forms cut across divisions, stain one another, inflect and re-work. Two totalities undone with force of strike: terrestrial completion, celestial abstraction. Magnanimity of events collapses into drawn-out repetition. Correlations condemn strike to continual connection. A persistent revision rendering backwards, re-contouring events passed.

The top chopped off, cut down into parts. The action of the topple describes the motion of conceptual realignment. Each and every time a debasement that incompletes: tree fall, obelisk shatter, head chop.

Celestial and terrestrial join as lightning strikes tree. Tempestuous, crackling passage incises distinct spheres. In instant of connection absolutes collapse. Earth knew celestial witness, but the strike from above showed vision of empty origination: skies devoid of gods.

Protrusions severed.

Absolutes undone.

Obelisk top directs gaze, pointing to the heavens. A strange gesture drawn through time, now only resonant with a once-held vision of the gods. A great surge of energy up through stone edifice shakes whole structure until rocketing out the top and blowing the pinnacle clean off.

Shattered stone crumbles, topples to the ground. Celestial direction ends in jagged mass, a lesson learned from times past perhaps.

Obelisk reconfigured through explosive ambition. No longer single crystallisation, no longer pinnacle with point so precise it loses visibility. Jagged edges proliferate pinnacles: varying heights, distinct directions. Separate stone masses channel energy discretely. From the smallest shard to the thickest lump, pinnacles point and channel as if the heavens had themselves exploded into a fractured series: a multiplicity of gods perhaps.

Obelisk-pointing rearranged for kaleidoscopic skies. Force fragmented.

Pinnacle topples to ground. Once-highest point of heavenly channel broken into tiny pieces. Parts slowly distributed throughout the public square by wandering revellers. Over time, such distributions come to map a substitute form of the multiplicitous pinnacle left on high. Arising of earthly forces shattered the pinnacle, collapsed the heavens. Left over, a monument to incompleteness, the lasting resolve of cleaving strike. A remnant of lost heavens.

Protrusions severed.

Absolutes undone.

Head chopped off, a strike of the blade rends. Stump of neck exposed, body opened to world. Pulled-taut skin gives over time, but with critical incision skin splits in an instant. Tight surface gives way, textural continuum interrupted by edges

involuted. A new world exposed by stump of neck. Body now reconfigured, ending in open wound rather than skin stretched over skull. Extremity chopped dispels a great myth: body presumed complete, reconfigured and interrupted.

Once head in the clouds and foot in the dirt, then chop cleaves and head and foot meet. Skin touches improperly whilst both extremities repose in mud. Improbable touchings across time; improbable compositions from strikes that separate. Absolute resistances dispelled in the brutality of the separation, dispelled in the almost-ineffable gesture of touch.

Protrusions severed.

Absolutes undone.

In each case absolute separation gives. The terrible enclosure of the absolute divided off from itself: the absolute absolute. A border denied and the possibility of touch from the outside exposed. Absolute absolute a simple impossibility. A dead world.

Each separating stroke provokes. Not only exposing inside to out, but rendering the basis of the proposition absurd: always a possibility of touch, always a possibility of exposure. Ineffable touch, rending blow, possibility no matter the force.

Absolutes ruptured, held wide open and exposed to the world.

A bolt strikes down to the earth, connection to the heavens momentarily holds. Gods exposed. In the instant of striking the tree, the connection undoes absolutes. Each exposed, one to the other. A reciprocal join works each way, celestial impacts terrestrial, then back through the instantaneous channel a part of the terrestrial world travels. Just a fragment, but just enough to begin to unwork the worlds separated. Heavens are emptied across time, but still the strike undoes. Even empty skies pulled in, the great celestial vacuum an absolute immanence itself, split through pure caprice:

no operation, only the chance connection to an outside that affirms the very aleatory nature of the strike. Chance undoes absolutes.

Obelisk stands imperious, great stone-heavy condensation. A monumental sovereign striking up into the heavens. Even when complete, pinnacle loses absolute enclosure by seeking affirmation on high. The great celestial reach undoes the sovereign form of stone, but not through a privileged connection to the heavens, rather just a connection and nothing more. A reach from one to another: connection, exposure. Obelisk point must topple, even if met with the acknowledging reach of a single God. Reach undoes. All collapses. The absolute edifice of the monument deformed by the gesture of its own ambition.

Extremity of the head, decisive seat of individuation. The subject condensed to cranial mass, perceptive concentration gathered up and raised above the world. Pineal gland, profound interface nestled tightly amongst the folds of the brain, pulls the body into the deception. A measured out corpus, extremities linked through articulations and pulled-tight muscles.

The open wound of the neck, site of spilt absolute. A decisive condensation of for-itself is chopped off, dropped to the forest floor, then later formed into an artefact of immanence once-supposed and fused to the groin.

Sacrificial gesture appropriates form of striking down. Flayed open body exposes nervous tissue for touch from world unfelt before. Strike of the blade exposes what was already surmised: absolute absolute is a fiction, a story of determination structuring other stories. Head chop to dispel it all.

Head chop shows poverty of absolute. The lightning strike, the excesses of obelisk, the sacrifice, each exposes parts shared between. Repeat strikes cleave, exposing hesitancy at the heart of a totalising ontology.

Rupture of absolution shows two things: the impossible individual, the impossible pure collective. Neither can be condensed absolutely to itself, neither can fully enclose and separate. Separating strikes don't just come as dramatic impositions, it isn't always a head chop that re-affirms this. Small gestures do the same too, each and every time they are made: the grace of a touch, the speaking of a word, a glance. Each time small gestures flay open absolutes, rendering separation apparent as fictive condition.

Blade lacerates body. Night spills into the world. Sacrifice explodes sacred components. Realms overlap. Sacred spills and interrupts, breaking up the regularity of the profane. Regimes de-structure one another. Internal compositions change. Separations are challenged. The sacrifice sits at the heart of this ceaseless interruption.

Beginning from blade strike, excrescent parts touch. Outsides inflect and expose divisions striping across. The simple story of a blade and a ceremonial invocation plays within the whole chain of interruptions.

Exposed in the strike is not the inside spilling out, showing hidden depths to the world beyond, rather what is revealed with stunning clarity is the surface itself. As knife slips through epidermis, the skin's surface is exposed the very moment blade-tip meets and pressures without puncture. A split-second later laceration shows surface as already exposed, already receptive to touch. The sacrificial spilling, although coming from out of the body, is a spilling of surface. Night as if skin had spread from body, epidermis stretched across the forest clearing: taut, hypersensitive.

As blade lacerates and exposes, sacred spills into world and contests. Separations falter. Night occludes, giving persistence to exposure as it indistinguishes world. Night exposes, ecstasy abounds. As response to spilling of night ecstasy recomposes relations. All exposed, all outside. Absolutes must abate for ecstasy to

take hold. Gripping and contorting, ecstasy exposes bodies more fully to touch: to touch of night, to touch of one another.

Absolutes undone following strike of blade: individual dissolves. No more separation, individual lost in ecstasy. Conceptual abstraction loses ground when full force of experience crashes against limits. Once supposed separate and impermeable, limits now falter. Individual isn't found in ecstasy, rather the same body recomposed meets a similar body recomposed. An each and every time distinct body, inclined towards another and exposed. A singular being patterned by the each and every time of exposure: met with a distinct touch, inclined outside. A singular being each and every time met in occlusive night, met in ecstatic contortions. A whole network of mutuality found in ecstasy. Its most virulent form apparent when night spill thickest. Laughter and tears rip through bodies, forming compositions of disparate eruptions that spread like bubbles through night. Indiscernible edges meet, resistance gives, limits passed through.

Somewhere in spilt night the rudiments of community are exposed. Between an absolute separation and an absolute fusion lies singular being as exposed in occlusive night. Upon this pattern, this rhythmic count, is community free from the crude structure of the absolutely separate or the absolutely fused.

Ecstasy, sharing, come from a world infused by death. A death heightened by sacrifice, wilful offering and waste of life, but death nonetheless. Killing blow of blade sets night free, sets ecstatic contortions in motion. At the heart of the clearing, the sacred invoked in the world through sacrifice disrupts. At the heart of the clearing too is the offering up to empty skies made by the strike of the blade. The death at the centre articulates, joins up group gathered for the offering made. Before the refusal of polarised absolutes comes the killing strike, comes death. Sacrificial offering connects

laceration, death, spilling, ecstasy, exposure of singular being. The killing strike sets open a process that situates death in the heart of sharing. Exposure to incommensurable loss sets ecstasy in motion. The intractable limit of life rendered in the centre of the clearing by a killing blow that resonates across time. Limit run up against by group: limit of comprehension, limit of life. Set out in this encounter is a principle of incompleteness, an horizon that stakes out a limit to be approached. A limit not of completion as such, but a limit that exposes group to limitless loss. A loss rendered even more confounding through voluntarism, an extreme waste willed. Death of like-being exposes limit. An exposition around which is patterned a common sharing. Formations structured, confronting finitude. Responses built that begin not from an overwhelming absolute, but a pattern of the singular collated through the concordance of like. One then another, each and every time, patterns build from singular response to exposure to incommensurable loss. Such a response to night comes out of this collapse of limit, an emphatic restatement of the poverty of absolute separation.

Each and every time a death patterns, restructures, elucidates. Shared between, death within the group offers a calibration. Small adjustments attune. Specific tonalities of death drawn in, accommodated.

Calibrated without predication, the death witnessed by the group is not work, is not an operationalised death for community. The killing strike is not first blow of veiled sharing structured around death set to work, rather sacrificial invocation of spilling comes to be calibrated by death without being set to work. Work structure comes from production tied to immanence. Absolutes work themselves. The community that arises around death is not produced by death.

Absolutes flayed open have no capacity to grasp. Death set to work would be another such production of absolutes, but an impossible production because death is not an isolable absolute. Death protrudes. Edge sticks into the world and the limit point of contact is the experience of finitude. Such an exposure, no matter how incommensurable, describes a limit within the world, a limit receptive and exposed.

Death an each time exposure to loss of like-being. Sacrificial offering is like-being spilt. From loss comes excess, spilling of night as occlusive waste. The incommensurable spills in two registers: like-being dying and excessive waste. Both are heterogeneous components, set free into the world and bringing challenges of conception. Both are met with an experience of finitude: incomprehensibility of death, the untallyable quality of excess. Night comes as mutual figuration. Darkness an harmonic intensification: incommensurables overlap.

Each time exposure shows fragility, the lightness and capricious quality of a life. Qualities incompatible with the staunch and mute resistance of absolutes. Absolutes don't pass, in passing singular beings don't become absolute.

Operationalised death works immanent totality, but such a structure doesn't countenance death in its properly incommensurable form. Operationalised death refuses finitude for counting, absorbing the excess into a structure that asks no questions of the limit struck against. Purified totalities are supported by this model: glorious death for the community, ignoble death to purge the community's excrescences.

Immanent refinement works back to absolutes, a precise resection of excess. Sacrifice sets free tumult of heterogeneous, an inassimilable mass. Parts in excess mark out the measures of touch. Excess provides the compositional inflections that assure opening, assure exposure. Operationalised death refuses the lightness of touch



for the dead weight of an absorption. A black-hole quality at the limit of death that reasserts a tremendous force of homogenisation. Refinement disposes of inflections. Yet resistant touch can dispel, must necessarily dispel. Resistance of touch holds open operationalised structures by acknowledging a contrary premise: death is incommensurable.

Set free in the world, incommensurable excess demands ecstatic response. A possibility only in a world where excrescent parts exist, where excess is not discounted by absorption into the simple count of immanent totalities. Ecstasy comes only in a world where parts are free. Necessarily resistant, these parts confound and refuse.

From one singular being to another, exposure to incommensurable opens passage of communication. Timorous unfurling joins one to another momentarily, in such a connection exposure is reassured. Singular being at risk in opening to the world. A gambit wagered on loss rather than gain, enriched by a free release of the incalculable. Mutual exposure of singular being refutes immanent totality.

Singular beings all, each and every time exposed. Singular beings set outside and freed to receptive touch. Such a touch is not an economised transaction, terms are not reciprocal and mutual interest lacks motivation. Touch is each time singular and willed. An each time without connection to a broader calculus of relational possibilities. Touch is not made for profit, touch is made only for touch: simple reciprocity.

Exigency of communication comes from spilt night. World occluded exposes double incommensurability of death and waste, giving exigency a heightened potency. Opening happens with ease in presence of spilt night. Events conflated through sacrificial offering intensify excrescent parts. The strike of the blade, the heterogeneity

of the sacred, the incommensurability of death, all overlap. Reinforced intensities open world more fully for ecstatic response.

Excessive modes of purification and organisation find legitimacy in mechanisms of enclosure. Economic and combative systems thus rely upon absolutes predicated on refusal of outside. Sacrificial offering comes as necessary response. Blade into the heart refutes mechanisms of absolution. Sacrifice in the forest has no expiatory quality. Sacrifice not for anything except an excess that unpicks the possibility of being for anything whatsoever. Sacrifice has no directional quality, it is not towards this or that, but rather spills in all directions: the occlusion of night swamping.

Communication passes. Exposition opens for the group in the intensified form of dark night. Spilling refuses prohibitions. Great, roaring ripostes to occluded world can be heard in patches as they disperse in dark night. Sobs spilling from bodies wrenched. Laughter and tears come as ecstatic responses to spilt night, come as extreme forms of communication, as grasps for outside. No coincidence that such forms of opening are accompanied by mouths pulled wide open or locked stare of eyes. Postures held despite all edges occluded. Body mimics communicative opening, as if exposure infectious. Contortions hold bodies awkward whilst convulsions challenge bodily dispositions. All postures come as responses to contact of outside. Ecstatic response provokes ways of grasping a world that transgresses communicative formations. The daylight world doesn't know such postures. Bodies posed grotesque, responses come in raucous laughter and streaming tears that foam up into an anonymous clamour. Impossible to tell in dark night from where such ejections come. Communication thus overlaps, taking on intense, shared formations that spread throughout night. Impossible to separate one laugh from another.

Whilst laughter spreads responses come, building upon the rhythm and intensity of preceding forms until laughter spreads all around clearing. Responses provoke one another: a contagion of laughs then a hyperactive spilling of tears.

Ecstasy continues in night with intense proliferation. Each time opening and exposing further. What happens in dark spill is an intensive, heightened form of communicative exposition. Provocation for such intensity comes from overlapping incommensurability, an overlap engendered by the sacrificial offering. Laughter and tears, unable to be tallied without comprehension of excess, come in night as ecstatic response to extremes of incommensurability. Nonetheless, the communicative situation persists from extreme form of dark night to world of daylight clarity. Communication hindered more in daylight world than night. Profane and homogeneous forms are not so easily disrupted. Parts unable to be tallied still break through on occasion, with passages eased by dispelling touch. The absolute of course has no real persistence, existing only as a misappropriating reading, a fictive disavowal of excess.

In world of daylight and world of spilt night, communication opens singular beings to sharing. Communication crosses between the spacing of singular beings, a process of cross-composition that can't be ignored. Regardless of form, exposure occurs. From one to another a network of relational space persists.

Simplicity of touch exposes, opens limits. The engagement of touch each time new, a distinct exposure in a distinct spacing. Singularities, composed and recomposed through exposure. Touch resonates from one to another. All such exposures combine into an acknowledgement of the incommensurable as an opened space.

Singular beings appear alongside other singular beings. Appearance always in common, always alongside, always spaced and open to touch. Such mutual exposition of singular beings is compearance, the possibility of any between.

Compearance is what renders the death of a like-being so troubling. Finitude compears, modifies the condition of the between of singular beings. Relation given new tenor when inflected by finitude. In the death of like-being, what was once an expository touch is no longer capable of meeting a receptive edge. The jutting edge of finitude provides implacable rebuke. A terrible instantiation against touch, delicate grasp no longer possible in this specific register. Expository touch must return and venture out anew. Hand returns trembling after contact of touch to jutting edge.

Desperate sadness of finitude marking a closure of relation inflects singular being too. Touch not a cold, distant reconnaissance but a caress: the inquisition of fingers stretching for fleeting contact. Such loss invoked in the unreciprocated contact of jutting edge offers potent model of community. In compearance of finitude, immanent death-work is disposed of. Contact of edge refuses operationalised death. Loss is no longer absorbed into collectivity with its potency annulled, rather loss resonates in spacing of compearance, modulating contact. With exposure modified, death reasserts a common and fragile limit. Death testifies to the incommensurable that is of the same structure as the incommensurable spacing of compearance, a spacing that refuses immanent totalities.

The group witnesses sacrificial death, and in that moment finitude compears. Amongst singularities loss restructures relations, appearing as an excessive part incapable of recuperation into a system of reckoning. Excrescent parts persist after death. Relational components are still reworked by their resistive and intractable quality. The refuting edge at the limit of death inflects the group. In that moment of

sharing death amongst, community is noted. Structures calibrated around loss provide a persistent witness and a continued relation to a world. Community extends this witnessing and this relation, offering a space sustaining partial traces. Marks not indelible, but resistant to scrubbing.

Spilt night shows sharply vacillation of subject. Shattered subject more clear, more pronounced in occlusive darkness. Touch heightened, a more sensitive reciprocity. Subject appears as if flayed open in night. Yet this was always already the case. Flayed only minorly in daylight, subject shattered still. Dark night not novel re-formation, but rather intensive continuance of already extant situation. Subject only ever shattered, the great rending truth at the heart of it all. Absolute subject: subject's mythic past.

Already shattered subject, thus no need for provocation. The relation of more than one singular being not reliant upon shattering brought into effect. Conditions of sharing and of exposition are already extant once compositional strangeness of singular being is acknowledged.

Subject shattered.

Subject spaced apart.

Subject spaced outside.

Ecstasy, spacing of subject rendered visible, intensified and set out into the world. Response to spilt night heightens shatter, extending into laughter and tears ripping from the body. Excess dispelled into a dark loss outside.

Taut enclosure of absolute sets out limits isolated from the world: a complete refusal of touch. Finding a parallel function in the individual, absolute enclosure operates as subject passing through world with simple indifference of isolated structure. Impervious to inflection, fictions stack whilst obfuscating incoherences.

Simple transmutations: absolute absolute, paragon of individuation, becomes individual in world, individual in world becomes subject, freed from inflection by internal coherence resisting change. Such conflation builds into a possible community modelled on a compositional logic operating according to the absolute. An immanence of one subject to another. A complex fusion into collected whole.

In night subject seen clearly as already shattered. In night conceptual affiliations of the absolute undone. Subject always shattered. Individual exposed. Absolute isolation collapses. Outside gains appearance in night. Predominance of exposure to an exterior spacing shows subject composed and recomposed. The proposition of subject posited once and for all swiftly dispelled.

In death preceding spill, once again subject undone. Loss, exposure to incommensurable part, experience of finitude, all apparent in the face of death as blade strikes right into the heart. Such exposures mark out limits of composed efficacy of subject. Rendered inoperative in the face of the incommensurable, subject stutters. A terrible trauma of inassimilable consequences confounding conceptual model.

Each modality of sacrifice provokes and undoes absolution of subject. Blade strike, night spilling, ecstasy, communication, all play out an each time anew confoundment. All abstractions falter. Hesitations abound where once sureties reigned. Confounded absolutes indispose certitudes. Particularities provoke and interrupt.

Sacrifice retrenches and relays interruptions each and every time. A repeat statement of shattered subject. Events build and pass as one more emphatic proposition of shatter, until the whole repetition builds into a chorus unleashed in spilt night. Heard in laughter's riposte to night and the killing blow is a chorus of voices built from interruption. Cycles build into harmonic structure set loose into night without clear

embodiment. As laughter sprawls through clearing, disarticulated voices pick up resonances and repeat. Persistent clamour of shatter heard as night endures, finding embodiment even in the heavy silence of the clearing that descends as group stop laughing and struggle for breath.

Obsessive staccato of interrupted laugh builds. Punctuations become slurs become breathless passages. Laughter turns to ecstatic scream. Statements of shattered subject erupt from jaws wrenched wide. Exhausted voices crack. Screams momentarily abate before erupting from raw mouths once more. All the while laughter persists, all the while tears well in bunched eyes staring into deep night. Repetition of shatter liquefied, then liberated from the body in strained motion attempting to grasp night. Steady stream of tears clouds vision, texturing dark occlusion that confronts seeing. Channels of liquid build slowly into accreted then suddenly dispelled inflections of night. The steady run-off of tears into the world mark tiny incisions of the shattered subject into the difficult reciprocity of outside. Tears, a tiny gesture seeking ecstatic relation.

Shattered subject left in tatters, exposed, abandoned. Shattering, an exposition. Splinter sticks outside, a minor provocative incision. Shards scatter, embed.

Ecstasy embraces outside. Subject shatters just a little more. Fragmentation increases, spreads further. Embrace engages exposure more fully.

Experience must modulate to engage ecstatic relation, becoming inner experience, an engagement with outside free from proclivities of worked production. Inner experience reaches for outside as incommensurable, moves towards relation already understood as in excess, unable to be fully grasped.

Repeat interruption, the continuous resistance of sacrificial event. Multiple shards build into complex rhythmic fragmentation. A complex beat, time compounded. Inner experience catches the fragmented rhythm.

Shattered subject is engaged by inner experience most fully. In inner experience modalities of knowing are extruded into absurd forms that attain resonance: the laugh, the cry, the scream. Inner experience grasps the incommensurability of this outside relation through graceful touch. Delicacy of outside belied by ferocity of laughter, tears, convulsions. Outside needs engagement, needs touch freed from the harsh grasp of discursivity that cuts straight to the point. Inner experience maintains and heightens the shattered subject, pitching a fragmented relation to the world. Tied to the rejection of the subject-complete, inner experience engages an extreme formation of subject-dispossessed. Laughter and tears, meeting in an intense form in spilt night, are the outcomes of this particular world engagement. An experience rooted in the incommensurable.

Inner experience gives rise to clear consciousness: the thinking of a subject shattered. Attaining height in ecstatic relation, clear consciousness comes through immanence refused. Shattered subject needs clear consciousness to engage the incommensurable exposure into which shards spread, without shattered subject does not notice fragmentation of shards, rather shattered subject is seen without incommensurable excrescence cast out, appearing docile and without fragmentary state exposed to the world. Clear consciousness sees subject and its fragmentary expositions. Resplendent daylight misses shards exposed in occlusive night, seeing only subject without shards: a circumscribed subject, all parts intact.

The incommensurable, the delicate grasp of inner experience, clear consciousness, all are testament to shattered subject. Provoked by extreme gesture of



sacrifice, such acknowledgements of outside come, their testimony persisting in occlusive night: sacrifice seen more clearly, so too the fable of the absolute.

Sacrifice reveals in spilt night subject as already shattered. Absolute thus appears as an overlaid image that misses excrescent parts in clear light of day. Fragments, as if completely translucent, need the heavy opacity of night to expose their existence through textural variations alone.

Subject shattered pre-exists the plunge of the blade. So too does the community, a relation of spacing structured not from spilling of night alone, but capable of being structured prior to sacrificial exposure because of already shattered subject.

Shattered subject constituted by relation to outside, a relation that is in part composed of other intermixtures. Each subject shattered, exposed. Parts out and into other parts. Outside, a transactional spacing cut across by shards. Multiple engagements stripe space. Incommensurable relations proliferate. Each intersection forms a community composed of parts in excess. Shards coalesce, communities form, but shards never resolve into full composites. Separate engagements form highly specific and intense intersections that blossom then pass. Community always open. Community always composed into and out of excess. Community always resisting immanent totalisation. Community always incomplete.

Spatial distributions intersect, testament to the singular general work of spacing at the heart of exposition. Shattered subject occupies place. Shards spread between spaced intervals, an each time each place intersection. Underlying sectional process is a rhythm of space, distributing and modulating here or there intersections.

Areas of overlap develop through repeat intersections. Such overlaps build into areal descriptions. Areal: a compound form of privation and delineation. At the same

time a tracing of delineated space, however briefly, and the privation of the realisation that would lock delineation into a single, immutable configuration.

Each spacing occupies a given here that outlines an areal dimension, a telescopic measure that can accommodate single or multiple interlocked spacings. A singular being occupies a peculiar, each time singular areality that traces the being-finite abandonment of singular being. Areality too measures a concatenation of singular beings, encompassing the multiplicity of here that traces a relation of one and another. Telescoping more, areality measures out a whole conflagration of singular beings, a complex overlap of traced areas. Each areality measures a specific, irreducible part incumbent upon here as a singular differentiation. Each time singular being fixed in a world on its own, however meagre. An each time resistance to the machinic qualities of a voracious immanence. Singular areality of here: a resistant part, irreducible and incommensurable.

Bodies contorted trace areality of ecstasy. A span across clearing measures singular dispositions collated, irreducible parts intact whilst shards clash.

A singular trace measures areality of community. Singular beings composed, articulations between shards form joins.

Areal tracings gain hesitancy as expanses grow, delineations shift, parts move.

Ecstasy, community, mutual arealisations. One from another. Ecstasy attests to basis of community through heightened tension of shattering convulsions; community catalyses ecstatic possibility through convulsed communications. Mutual arealisations trace spacings of events that interpose singular beings whilst maintaining the irreducible components holding one from another.

Mutual areality of ecstasy and community overlap without complete identity. Edges of overlap: patterned by disturbance, correspondence and excess. Mutual

saturations and excesses colour limits, and mark out through this process the non-identity of mutual arealities.

Mutual arealisation constitutes ingress of parts. Spacings overlap whilst maintaining resistant, incommensurable components. One over another, arealisations of ecstasy and community attest to one another: ecstasy as convulsed community, community as recomposed ecstasy. Locked between two polarities, the double work of arealisation traces a rhythmic disruption of immanence.

Described, delimited area poses resistance to immanent reduction. Such absorptions struggle against irreducible parts of here. Singular being provides autonomous resistance, whilst mutual areality provokes failure of immanence by refusing the coincident realisation of community and ecstasy. A simple, cohesive overlap leaves no excrescent parts, renders community as realised work of ecstasy, and ecstasy as paroxysm of community always equal to itself: a heightened, controlled tension and nothing more.

Mutual arealisation dispatches the irreducible part between ecstasy and community to disrupt realising work. The sacrificial group in the forest are caught in a night testifying to these two events. Right in the middle of it all is immanence confounded. Even the small areality of a singular being opens an unworkable, resistant space. The incommensurable here resists. All work, all immanent identification runs up against the limit of areality. Each and every time a here in excess of the grasp of realisation. Singular being thus always posed on a precipice; clamour of grasp can tip, sending singular being tumbling. Areality retraced through tumble, a new spacing, singular being perched once more on an edge. Repeat tumble is subject shattered. Fragile life still resistant to disruption of tumble.

Two poles of areality: ecstasy, community. Without mutual overlap arealisation becomes simple, realised measure. Discursive connectivity and profane surety bisect mutual interpellations, severing confused mutualities and rescinding indistinction by simple assertion.

Ecstatic pole realised alone demarcates fascist orgy. The mutual identification of realised parts convulsed. Without areality, resistance is flattened and immanent composition runs rampant. But the fascist ecstasy misses the irreducibility of singular being. The machinic compulsion for absorption works tirelessly to recycle these excrescent parts: pulling in, pulling apart to ever-more heightened absurdities. The only aim to process and re-process excrescent parts until convinced nothing escaped. The great irony of the absorptive ambition lost amongst ecstatic compulsions running without abatement.

Communitarian pole alone realises communist exigency: an absolute reduction. Egalitarian principle of simple equality flays distinction. Immanent project of a different order, but structural obsession with excrescence persists. Arealty of community mapped into productive domain of realised work. From one to another production interfaces, excrescent parts pulled in then denied.

Necessity of mutual areality found between these two possibilities. A double resistance to the work of immanence through the interruption of operationalised and realising components. Arealty traces the each time irreducible part, leaving an unfinished composition of resistance: ever-changing, becoming incommensurable.

Mutual areality disrupts immanence. Two polarities unwork, between one and another continual shift, continual elision. Between the two the group are lost in occlusive night. Events acquiesce to polarised suspension. Lost in double areal tracing, group wavers. Night persists as medial interface, an ambiguous space of double

arealisation constituted from excess parts. Spilt night opens modality of areality for occupancy by group, a radical, intensely strange spacing of heightened incommensurability. Laughter and tears come as only possible response to ungraspable components. Lost within mutual arealisation, group thus come to witness something more: in this areal interruption, death goes awry.

### *Arisen*

Twitch of corpse hits group like a bullet, jarring the world, forcing wide open. Incertitude of death given stark and apparent form as a small and intense gesture crushes the surety of its passing. Death interrupted. Incompleted as if sent back from another world.

Acéphale stands, caught between two arealised poles. Disruptive exigency finds final, emphatic statement in suspension of death. Magisterial excrescence, Acéphale stands as death stutters. Interruptive quality of night finds perfect embodiment in arising of Acéphale.

Tracing an extremity of areality, Acéphale stands out of conflict of incompatible and unstable forms. A clash of areal descriptions that are themselves already conflicted. A heightened resistance to immanence is borne from this tension of polar arealities. Acéphale stands from out of the suspended gap of interrupted immanence, an harmonic production from the mutual interface. Essentially arising without choice; no volition, just death corrupted, leaving no option but to stand back up.

In arising Acéphale thus traces an areality already extensively interrupted. From the intersection of one and another areal description arises a third that destabilises everything further. Acéphale, areality at its most difficult. Capable of

disorganising its own forms, Acéphale recomposes areal descriptions through incessant wandering. An extra-excrescence, Acéphale carries forceful interruption through even the most stable of forms. Acéphale embraces chaotically, all engagements problematise.

Arising within polar arealities, Acéphale appropriates their mutual disorganisation by providing a roaming figure that performs the mutual interruption in perpetuity.

Arisen Acéphale recuperates the sacred, excess and arealisation into a single, capricious figure: all interruption.

Acéphale stands, and death no longer has troubling quality of like-being lost. In arising Acéphale loses similitude, but in doing so gains a trans-worldly character that is all the more troubling because finitude is corrupted. Without like-being, death no longer simply the incommensurable. The null appearance of Acéphale confounds all, moving beyond relational finitude to an extremity of disavowal: no longer absolutes. Acéphale in a way absolutely indistinct.

Arising acts as a peculiar guarantee of the death of like-being, a death more complete because radically dispossessive: the same being doesn't arise, but rather a novel creation. No longer like-being, but its corruption into the radically dissimilar. A corruption brought about by the unworking force of interruption. The unworking of interruption is not a simple reversal of worked process, a formal intervention that turns around, but rather something more complex. Death unworkable because outside all work. The unworking disposition of Acéphale assimilates and simultaneously corrupts death. Acéphale, an unworking become frenzied.

An active disorganisation of death, Acéphale stands without acknowledgement of recognition, then sets about the disorganisation of its own forms. All bodily re-

structuring is unworking of like-being, a distancing of like-being from similitude, from pervasive strictures of work. Unworking must be capricious, must be sovereign. Acéphale recomposing is sovereign incision. A resection of like-being into being-interrupted.

Acéphale arises, interrupts like-being: shatter of subject finds forceful affirmation. Imposition of shard gains clarity as unworked immanence gains persistence and traction. Embodied interruption stands tall: a monumental confirmation.

Acéphale: shatter.

Arising as only shatter and nothing more, Acéphale instantiates a radical intermixing. The already shattered subject presupposed disappears completely. The lack of antecedent subject leaves Acéphale as vacillating confusion, a categorical confoundment that disturbs by refusing any form of latent differentiation. A body transmorphing, impossibility of proper predication: Acéphale improperious.

Acéphale appears when inner experience most voluptuous. At the height of its perverse modality of grasping the world, inner experience meets Acéphale. A regal figure of denied discursivity. Acéphale perhaps inner experience's most proper expectation. Composed of almost full chaos of heterogeneity, Acéphale exceeds the profane world to the point of disappearance. Celestial ascent, a necessary call.

As shatter without antecedent subject, Acéphale must be grasped by consciousness most clear. A consciousness exposed to outside in occlusive night; a consciousness with such clarity that it desecrates the fable of the absolute subject.

Emphatic shatter extended: disruption and dispossession of consciousness. Outside interposes and flays open absolute subject. Clarity comes from shatter

emphasised. A more vigorous fragmentation opens, risk increased to accommodate terrible scope of interruption of Acéphale.

From arising comes emphatic interruption. Modulations of grasping world undone. Troubled profane loses structure, leaving only presentiments of excess to be grasped by novel contortions of experience. A retrenchment of shatter as pre-existent mode.

Extension of shatter caught most clearly in ecstatic contortion of bodies in night. Control lost, body distends, opens and extends into outside. Ecstasy amplifies shatter, forcing majority of distension of singular being into outermost shards. Antecedent subject decomposed yet further into outside extremities where shards overlap. Ecstasy brings heightened, intensified displacement. A foretelling of extreme distension of Acéphale, an interruption that goes so far the whole lot decomposes. Operation of death at the heart of the clearing prepares Acéphale for just such a constitution. Forcing the sacrificial offering into an extremity of dispossession, Acéphale arises liberated from any such presuppositions. On the other side of subject-constitution, but on this side of the world still.

Laughter and tears stop long before Acéphale stands. No need for ecstatic response when arising takes on the whole structure of the stupefaction of spilt night. Ecstasy, as response to heterogeneity, obviates communicative passage. Acéphale absorbs ecstatic response, becoming exemplar of communication: flayed wide open, limits refuted, Acéphale shows passage between. A paragon of communication, Acéphale bounds through presumptive limits; expositions rendered clearly through confounding predisposition of Acéphale.

Chaotic unworking embodied. Limits undone. Passages opened. Communicative exigency cuts across. Acéphale undoes absolutes at the most extreme.



Arising from death, Acéphale renders finality helpless, giving the apparent absolute of death a faltering quality. Just one such contravention and the certitude of the edifice collapses. Arising of Acéphale takes on the role of a single and decisive refutation of certitude, a single and decisive refutation of absolutes. Confoundment of death gives Acéphale the quality of an ideal instance of communication. A great bellow interrupts the whole structure of enclosure, refusing absolutes with peals of sound ejected from gaping mouth.

Acéphale stands then marches off, a confoundment of finality. Liberated from closure, the march carries Acéphale through worlds presumed distinct: the terrestrial, the celestial, the mythic. Trailing limits confounded in its wake, the march undoes separations, clashing worlds and exposing limits further. The whole march takes on the role of a chaotic exposition of communication. Pulled to an extreme, communication plays out over exposures wide open, thresholds crossed and limits confounded.

Acéphale arises. An apparitional quality persists, a hesitant appearance that comes from the confoundment of arising. Dispersing, once the first motions of Acéphale begin, the apparitional quality gives way to the more troubling persistence of an embodied arising from death.

Appearance of Acéphale in front of the group confers upon the event a quality of perverse witnessing. Between each member, the arising of Acéphale attested to. Testimonies pervade between, but what's really testified to is the necessity of the alongside of appearance. Appearance, constituted by alongside: compearance.

From out of the decisive closure of death for a world of the living, the arising of Acéphale refuses the isolation of an absolute separation. Finality of death collapses in the moment of a single arising, the whole edifice cast into doubt. Once the

apparency of absolute enclosure is denied certitude, appearance itself no longer has a unitary quality. Opened up by the hesitancy of a death corrupted, unitary division falters, exposing passages between. Such passages confound the work of appearance isolated from other appearances. The *co* of compearance blossoms within these passages, constituting the knotty, intractable mutuality of their spacing. Passages inflect, passages cross, passages meet. From one to another, *co* pertains. Linked up: a whole mutuality, a whole world.

Acéphale does not disturb or unwork compearance. Rather the arising of Acéphale and the interruptions that spread are a decisive testimony to compearance. Death of like-being is troubling precisely because of compearance, the finitude of the passage of death presents irreconcilable limit right at the heart appearance alongside. A limit run up against when grasp reaches for constitutive alongside. Loss resonates in spacing of compearance, but when like-being arises anew, resonance of spacing encounters a radically discordant appearance. Like-being dissolves through transit of resonant passage into Acéphale, an arising of radical dissimilarity. Unlike any being, Acéphale stands up out of experience of finitude, stands up into a world in which the resonance of loss carries an unworldly quality. Another world invoked, a world dissimilar.

Resonance of arising is testimony to compearance, an embodiment illuminating compearance through the torsion of a troubling loss. Acéphale, persistent interruption. Continual confoundment clarifies exposure between one being and another.

Acéphale arising in front of the group stands as an emblem of the mutual exposition that makes compearance a necessity. The exposition is given a clear form in the sacrificial death, taking on a profound structure once death is corrupted.

Exposition is pulled by Acéphale to an almost unbearable tension. Such a tension extrudes compearance, offering an intense form of clarification. Acéphale thus takes on the form of an excrescent part that testifies to the very persistence of compearance. Alongside is always testified to by the expository character of excrescence, an outside part drawing out comfortable enclosure into an exposed space, a space of compearance. Wandering Acéphale foregrounds this process, exposing space through ceaseless march: unworking, interrupting.

Excrescent part, Acéphale abandoned to the world. Abandoned through strike of blade, abandoned through sacrifice to an arising that never ends. This is why Acéphale continually recomposes: cuts, excisions, additions here or there. Each and every time a creation anew. But creation without end is only testified to secondarily by recomposition, an approximate series of formal interventions responding to a birth without end. This birth is the brute rendering of the fact of being abandoned.

The testamentary structure of Acéphale comes from the absurdity of arising and the continual interruption that resounds.

Yet Acéphale not paragon of abandonment, but rather one amongst an infinitely proliferating series of possible figures that capture abandonment through a discordant relation. Acéphale, just one more multiply-spoken nonessential figuration of the abandonment of being.

Presumed absolution of being falters when testaments to spacing and abandonment arise. Acéphale profoundly troubling in this regard because of monumental quality of arising: architectural glory of testimony. Rejecting the implorations of *lama sabacthani*, Acéphale wills an engagement with death, commands sacrifice, forcefully desires celestial ascent. All testify to abandoned being.

The multiply-spoken finds approximation in persistent interruptions by Acéphale. A continual revision of actions, components and worlds renders such characteristics with a blistering clarity, foregrounding the efficacy and profundity of abandonment. All made clear without the softening mitigation of conditional statement.

There is no *for* of the sacrifice and death of Acéphale, except for the troubling *for* of an overzealous begetting that interrupts and undoes. There is in the end only the chaotic arising of an end without clear purpose, an explosive liberation of energy that crackles into the world. Just disruption arising: “Behold Acéphale!”

### *Celestial*

Up, up into heavens Acéphale goes. Ever skyward ascent from earth to mythic skies. Heavens rent, then swallowed whole. Acéphale ascends, then disappears into heavenly abyss. Soon return the placid night skies, littered with celestial bodies: calm vision of furious energy.

Ecstatic projection streaks high, Acéphale ascends rapidly into embracing dark of heavens, below necks crane to follow trajectory, the uncomfortable contortion of a vertical gaze meeting the climax of celestial arc before disappearance, maximal discomfort accompanies final glimmer of Acéphale before the darkness swallows: a parting gift of bodily contortion.

Craned necks lower, gazes return to comfort of horizontal looking. Above, stars streak skies, celestial bodies roam on unknown adventures. Acéphale become just one more barely discernible trajectory.

Implication of compearance in celestial challenges the singular appearance of infallible unity, restaging the celestial as an each time singular world, inflected each and every time by the streaked passage left in the wake of Acéphale. Compearance knots all. The heavens above are shown to be constituted through compearance, tied up similarly to the terrestrial. Each and every time celestial worlds appear alongside, each and every time Acéphale passes between to testify to this situation. Celestial no longer paragon of absolute appearance, but just another world compearing.

Compearance of worlds enables wander of Acéphale. In worlds alongside one another Acéphale moves freely. As ecstatic embodiment movement is frenetic, chaotic, but a movement made possible by compearance nonetheless.

Ecstatic areality and areality of community find confounding double arealisation in Acéphale. Arising from clash of arealities Acéphale describes a partial complement of both, a structure knotting within itself a torsion of two conflicting arealities. Doubled, conflictual areality is drawn into the celestial once Acéphale begins heavenly ascent. Extrusion into the celestial forms a shuttling passage.

Areality of ecstasy moves through world passages, twisting and contorting as it goes. Constantly re-described through passage, areality with freedom of movement between is subsequently shaped through transitions. Arealty doesn't come as prime operative of passage and inflection, but is rather just one more part of an inflecting crossover.

Acéphale testifies to shattered subject. Celestial soaring heightens testimony by drawing a terrible, clear provocation across the expanse of the heavens. Great multiplicity of inclinations spreads. Shatter not only across celestial expanse, but pulled through heavenly worlds too. Parts into and through other parts, fragments traverse worlds.

No real subject constitution of Acéphale, no real consistency. Even predicate structure slips: Acéphale isn't anything.

Acéphale wanders, disrupts, participates. All the while shatter proliferates through worlds. The where of Acéphale becomes exceptionally problematic as worlds are spanned across one another through shattered disposition. For Acéphale not so much a where, but a case of a multiplicity of theres. A series of co-existent apparencies that meet as they thread through the shattered constitution of Acéphale. Celestial wander and participation in mythic scenes thus constitute a continual process of dispossession. Interpellation in storied heavens opens up worlds to reconstitution.

### *Myth worlds*

Acéphale roams through mythic worlds. An adventure without purpose, ceaseless wander takes in the disparate. All the while Acéphale accumulates.

Ventures move from skies, to mountains, seas, temples, battlefields.

Each time, transition moves through strange medium of skies. Passages between worlds taking place through a celestial wander, each and every time linking worlds anew. Passage traversed by Acéphale undoes separations. Splitting limits Acéphale covers worlds at a ferocious pace, with material too drawn in and manipulated at terrific speed.

Each time, transition streaked through with material. A trail lingers from one world to another, knotted through skies that retain traces of the wandering trajectory of Acéphale. Ecstatic embodiment marches through. Skies facilitate the transfer of the disruptive energy of Acéphale between worlds. As passage, skies open wide for Acéphale as embodied ecstasy. Skies streaked as communicative passage. Material trailed between one world and another plays out extreme consequences of ecstatic

opening. Partial distributions by Acéphale act as excrescent materials that disrupt and begin to modify worlds. As Acéphale continues to roam, passages begin to knot through one another, increasing channels of distribution and forcing progressively more interruptions into worlds stretched across. Such streaked materials expose connectivity of worlds. Multiplicitous appearance is emphatically stated as Acéphale roams through, trailing inflections that get snagged and then linger.

Each time, appearance is not brought about by Acéphale, but each inflection spreading into appearance of worlds shifts worlds partially. Coexistence of worlds drawn out through wander of Acéphale shows extrusion of compearance, a pull from world of sacrifice right through into the proliferation of mythic worlds. A perverse inversion of celestial effectivity. Terrestrial god-head, sent upwards to do the debased work of the world in sacred realms. Only through sacrifice contorted can such operations pertain.

Each time, Acéphale interrupts areal descriptions of mythic worlds. Well-worn, established worlds are appropriated by celestial trajectory of Acéphale. With each scene of interruption an extant areal description, more or less established parameters hover, lending the mythic world its sheen of godly indecision. Approximation abounds in the face of the almighty. imprecision of world gives mythic realm its reverential command. The otherworldly remains otherworldly by refusing decisive parameters of measured worlds. In some way, the sacred retains this legacy of approximation and the capacity for transformation.

Acéphale stops for rest, no hurry in world without pressing time. An indefinite wait whilst world continues.

New godhead sat atop mountain peak. Just another static protrusion over valleys below. Stone-like persistence gives Acéphale a seemingly infinite patience.

Coming to appear as an outcrop of the world rather than a distant, terrible interloper. Such persistence endures until Acéphale arises magisterial. Towering above the valleys below, illusion of autochthonous birth swiftly undone in domineering proclamation from a world otherwise. Confines shatter, parameters of world are aggressively redrawn, a more pressing areal disruption. Action increases pace of areal intervention, forcing parametric shifts with quick, decisive incisions.

Areal interventions proliferate as Acéphale continues adventure. Pace of interventions and actions increase as Acéphale forces ever more chaotically into mythic worlds.

Magisterial stance becomes flying trajectory. A sweep across skies once more, led by brutal conjunction of blade and heart. Drawn upwards into the vortex of the skies by meeting of hard-tip and soft force of life. A bloody meeting held just apart, extreme force of begetting attraction resisted by determination of Acéphale.

Implacable stride across storm-whipped seas, Acéphale marches on. Strides romp over turbulent water whilst heart aflame blazes bright, a beacon of light against dark skies. Lofted heart leads progress, lighting path for stride of Acéphale. On and on march goes. Relentless progression to Dionysian intervention: a crude appropriation of ritualised desecration.

Props gathered. Temple column torn from oracle's shroud, pulled tight to body in crook of right arm. Stone split, Ionic-top awry. Snake wraps left leg. Heart become grapevine gripped in left hand, life force relents, transmuting to organism of intoxication. Heart wrenched, aflame, then shifts form, distending body outwards along clenched vine of intoxication's shifting prowess. Pulled out, extruded and lost to dizzy world of bacchanalic frenzy, distension of body carries through into myth world with recomposition begun anew. Groin-skull shifts form, taking on intoxicating



stare of Medusa-head seeking a reciprocal gaze. Ossifying draw waits to lure body outside once more, frozen, displaced. Blade, now switched to right hand, stabs again into the chest. A fresh wound vent, night spills once again.

Bacchanalic frenzy continues into enraged world of battle until the persistent areal interventions begin, with forceful reciprocity, to impact Acéphale. A head appears within the smoke-shrouded chaos of the melee. Heart abandoned, chest opening closed, stars scattered and dispersed. Acéphale charges, blade held aloft, recrowned with bullhead majesty. Charge embraces orgy of enraptured bodies in stride, coveting knots of flesh with limbs locked and bodies split by speartips and claws.

Charge continues through shroud of night, intensity of melee increases. Bodies multiply as rapture proliferates. Frantic chaos abounds in shroud of night.

Another head appears whilst battle rages. Bullheaded twice.

Intoxication further contorts as Acéphale looks both ways. Past and future knotted into bullhead stare of Acéphale. Relentless gaze penetrates maelstrom with calm looking. The past, the future, led ever-onward by heart ablaze.

Frenzy continues.

Night falls once again. Terrible occlusion, all black.

Waiting, waiting.

Occlusion dissipates, Acéphale gone.

Bullhead on ground.

A swift, unseen blow had decapitated once more. Bullhead left as legacy in mythic world. A strange object intervening, perpetually out-of-place. Terrible memento of areal destruction, bullhead waits, aflame.

A fragment abandoned in mythic world, result of another unseen strike. First step in another venture forth into worlds anew. A profound leaving, height of scattered fragments left in wake of Acéphale. Concentrated form of dispossessing and dispossessive strikes. Bullhead stands alone as height of unworking trajectory. Leftover part troubles with implacable gaze, troubles with persistence.

Bullhead fragment attests to unbounded limits. Parts in excess interpolate and disrupt. Fragments lack enumerable operational norms, instead always coming in excess of expectancy. Fragment is outside: an improper traversal.

Venturing through mythic realms Acéphale picks up, distributes and creates fragments. Material follows the trans-worldly venture of Acéphale, accreting to body and being carried through. Secretions, deposits occur also. Fragments dispatched or created are left abandoned in alien worlds. Strange impositions, fragments disrupt and confound in their distribution, testimony as they are to an outside intervening. Such disruptions are heightened in mythic realms through interference with constitutional stories. Narrative edifice unshackled, world shatters.

The torsional areality of Acéphale pulls at mythic scenes. Restructuring and redescribing the realms of well-known stories. Areal tracings shift and the terrains of narration falter, leaving stories disrupted. Torsional areal tracings challenge contours, Acéphale shuttling through worlds doubly undoes world limits. The communicative traipsing of detritus confounds worlds, whilst the areal tracing that conflicts two counterposed arealities in Acéphale pulls at the edges and deforms. The worlds ventured into by the intensive areal form of Acéphale flex and contort, whilst the areal form is traced and retraced throughout engagements with new worlds.

Pulled at areality sustains mythic realms, the described lineaments of a world beyond world. A celestial realm outside the world tracing and refining stories. Areal

description of mythic worlds maintain small measure of disruption and instability. Variance shifts structures whilst leaving the whole world anchored to a set of mutable but broadly stable commonalities. The areal torsion of Acéphale throws all into disarray. Delimited parameters overwhelmed. Venture of Acéphale pulls hesitant tracings into vortex that folds alien components right through.

Each time, myth worlds spill into one another following trajectory of Acéphale. Fragments and residues are left in this tunnelling, component parts that become themselves tracings of areal contortions. All remain as problematising legacies of adventure of Acéphale. Redundant parts persist. A disruptive and unworking heritage is buried in the very heart of the areality of myth.

Bullhead rests.

Acéphale disappeared. Off into other realms.

Cycle begun again.

Fourth strike resonates: lightning strike, blade puncture, obelisk-top crumble, bullhead decapitation, all overlap. New-found resonance disrupts homology of three strikes, opening up the harmonic distension, causing ring of intoxication to cease.

Obelisk loses lure.

Body drops, limp, to concrete ground.

Fall complete.

Obelisk ceases. Figure left collapsed supine on concrete plane below, sprawled, surrounded by scattered stone debris. Weak sun continues motion through sky, arcing around the southern face of the obelisk whilst figure lies supine across concrete plane, repose caressed by motions of shadow. A strange parallel, once more dropped into the world.

# Face

“Behold Acéphale!”

Clamorous resound.

Under clear night stars bear witness to words acclaiming.

“Behold Acéphale!”

Translucent celestial carries clarity of starlight incisions. Surefooted protestations of the gods. Glimmer, the vibrancy of witnessing. Light meets heavy opacity of dirt. Humus-strewn forest floor decomposes celestial imprecations. Just more material.

Between star-strewn skies and decomposing earth, a spaced tension: the height of an upward gaze and the guarantee of an earthly descent. Planar mirrors mapped in craned-neck relations. Upwards opens and implores, sensorial expectancy, the discomfort of muscles pulled tight, an endurance under the eyes of the gods. Downcast looking, the timidity of a world too much. Neck slack, a relent to the ever-present exhaustion of verticality.

A gaze to the heavens, sidereal brilliance causes pupillary contraction. An intense point of black appropriating the cast down light of previous millennia. Temporal juncture: the luminescence of the infinite thronging against cornea. A meeting of materials across distance almost incomprehensible, except for the simple elegance of seeing.

Downcast eyes gaze into glum muck. Stuff of decomposition, the teeming discarded. Pupils dilate. A sympathetic expanse of black. Impoverished life of ground pulls in and traps light. Magnanimity of celestial grace caught amongst so much detritus. Elegant skies and adjunct of stolid impermeable. Filthy opacity clouds vision,

eyes slow then expand, a clamour for the merest detail. The whole conflict of celestial and terrestrial played out in pupillary response to planar articulations: up, down, narrow, wide, focus, diffusion.

Infinite expanse arcs high and deep above the detritus-filled totality of earthly body. One over against the other. Regimes of form clash in arc of neck, muscular torsion and the grace of the skies.

Infinite expanse of celestial grappled with through starlight punctuations. Illuminating anchors cast adrift in the infinite impossible. Neck cranes for the height of the address. A great imploration from on high, from outside. Empty skies, void of transcendence. Devoid of height, just a thin smear of vacuum awaiting.

“Behold Acéphale!”

Still clamorous resound fills clearing, slowly dissipating through ceaseless drift into empty heavens. As always, all lost eventually to the distant infinite above.

Blade into heart. Night spilt. Before all this he stood at the centre of the clearing. Magnanimous waiting, bathed in radiance of an event yet to come. The beauty of future dereliction, offered without presumption in the glory of futility. Just one amongst group, stood and awaiting, all affiliated around a gesture not yet.

Blade struck down from within gathering, a death amidst. A terrible secret shared: the silent witnessing of empty heavens and the slow, whispering rustle of arborescent canopies.

Death alongside put group beside itself. Absenting amongst resounds in accord with the yet to come clamour of voices that will proclaim “Behold Acéphale!” Radical exposition of the question of totality posed by the devastating incision of blade strike. Deep, deep into the heart of the matter, a great and tragic simultaneity: a gesture

flaying life and cutting right into the heart of existence punctuating alongside. Brutal conflict spills, multiplicitous register of expositions: life spilt into a compound of incommensurables, stood, mouths agape, clamouring.

Alongside, finitude. Unfettering not privative but simply one more exposure opened by the dissymmetrical tenor of all relation. Such exposure finds a radical instantiation with the brutal scene of a blade driven hilt-deep into supine body. Emphatic puncture. Each time struck through, finitude experienced as modality of the already-prior absolved relation to the infinite that the other presents. Finitude, a worldly compound of infinitude's absolution.

A devastating intimacy, radical dispossession of blade strike cuts through certitude, the simple nudity of address. Close correspondence loses form in killing strike. Absented friend no longer the intimately convoked *tu*, the measure of a shared exposition, but rather becomes the strange, illimitable tenor of formality: *vous*. A master unknown, beckoning from without. The terrible impropriety demanding only the most proper of addresses. Incertitude cripples proximity, leaving only a survivor ripped right through: tattered, stammering formal invocations: "you, you, you?"

Other conflicts, poses a question unanswerable. Passing alongside fragments time, the crushing temporality of dying, the crushing temporality of witnessing. A temporal split between the time of dying, the no longer lived temporality of victim's passing, and the each time distinct temporality of witnessing. Intimate time of dying resists world-historical time, a taut and knotted world separate from the reality of historical progress. Intimate time conflicts world, memory interferes, shaping and interrupting, constituting a whole landscape of split and fractured temporalities that form only punctual homologies with the world-historical progress. Time of dying comes in concert with a time of witnessing. Alongside mandates a trajectory of

intimate times knotted into a world-historical time, which in the intractable moment of dying becomes an irrelevancy. A whole knot of times exposed alongside, each a veracity of world, each intersected. Time of dying, distended and dispossessive instant, has no end. Certitude slips into the uncertain mechanism of an intimate temporality forcefully exposed to group witnessing. Exposed in blade strike is radical dissymmetry of time's relation, exposed is the immeasurable distance of the other staging the invocation from elsewhere that troubles through its dissymmetry. All drawn out to an extreme tension through the absenting strike, rendering the other more conspicuous through a debilitating contortion of relation: a dissymmetry slipping into another plane. Finitude, forceful relation to infinitude that the other always is.

Blade struck. Night spilt. Darkness, the compound form of incommensurable times clashing. Occlusion comes not just as swamping and refusal of daylight clarity, but as the conflict of times that chaotically twist through the world-historical time of the clearing. A conflict of reals lived through ecstatically by group.

All occluded.

Time passed: indefinite.

Darkness cleared. Figure arose. Standing as if from resolution of conflicting time. The once-passed now arisen. Once more vertical. No longer a totality of death attested to in the time of a survivor witnessing intimate temporality clashing with world-historical. Rather clashing finds radical attestation in arising, as if compound time re-appropriated by now arisen figure. Totality emphatically undone, what was revealed was surmised all along: not total, infinite.

Stood, a new incommensurable. Radical dissymmetry pressed through even more extreme contortions, arisen to be beheld, arisen as trouble, perversion, an incommensurable.

Death corrupted: arisen headless.

Two feet catch attention, stood stock-still next to now-vacant tree stump. Feet planted firmly. Toes splayed amongst dirt, holding body tall above: strict verticality.

Above, scraped-clean skull, fused to groin. Dead-eye stare from a face eviscerated. Arisen, death corrupted, caress of blade over face's flesh stripped last vestiges of troubling familiarity. Scrape not cathartic but palliative, recuperation of face into corrupted death, liberated now from confines of flesh and muscle. Persistence of bone freed to the world. Two hollow eyes stare out, relation traced through haunting emptiness and half-remembered familiarity of a once imploring visage. From outside comes the look, the rending dissymmetry of the other, then blade struck, death passed, figure arose, skull cleansed and a final recuperation doubles up relic of once imparted gaze and dead stare of the radical incommensurable. Trapped as if between worlds, familiarity of face and its tragic scraped-clean absence form a distemporalised compound that can claim propriety of neither world. All lost in corruption.

Scraped-clean skull compound. Complex formation of dissymmetrical imprecation doubled up (living and dead eyes, memory and relic) and the spilt death temporality that contests finality of death. Corrupted compound both affirms the separateness of I whilst failing to convince of the exact measure of this separation. Unable, as it is, to present the living incommensurable: the expressive quality of the face lost in a concretisation of visage giving form precedence over expression. An unrelenting glare of empty sockets.



Concretisation thus mobilises both a more radical dissymmetry from transit through death to arisen form, and at the same time shows forth an inadequacy through an unchanging form of expression, which slowly erodes the expressive potency of a visage each time anew. Instead left is a tatty, residual substitute that presents a traumatic and unceasing vision: scraped head and hollowed eyes. A form grown tired, welcomed slowly for its familiar contours, its no longer troubling injunctions.

Deep gaze into dead eyes relinquished. Upward motion continues as neck uncranes further. White luminescence of two stars causes intense pupillary contraction. Eyes squint. A star sits bright over each nipple. Two celestial punctuations liberated from heavens with two precise incisions of blade. Infinite height of heavens dropped to earth, made fall with the same brutal gesture that spilt night, that begat the tall-standing figure. Chthonic arising slices down brilliant infinite to intimate proximity. Held close, tight on chest, bright-burning analogues of infinite form relation that does not exhaust their distant brilliance. Across chest the tension of repeated absolution, an each time proximity that neither exhausts nor renders merely relative. A whole drama of infinitude's proximity exposed in the crude theatre of arisen figure's static chest. A scene without palpations: no heart, no blood, no breath.

In fall, stars become mystical. Detritus of the heavens, gathered as innumerable above, sliced and fallen into a magisterial two. One then another bright-shining. Brilliant and intimate distance.

Pupils expand. A slow, fogged adjustment as neck cranes up further. Two arms held wide, maximal distance of body's spread. Horizontal reach spans, gripped tight in either hand: a blade, a flaming heart. Agents of conflict that begat, now held wide apart. An intimate distance maintained, body's span as agent of intervention, arisen

from conflict, returning to resist once more. Arms locked tight, magnetic attraction still attempts to draw close: as if a destiny of conflict.

Blade catches starlight. Occasional burst of celestial brilliance cast about clearing. Heart alight, as if caught by celestial flame. A parallel burning, interminable. The incomprehensible heart consumed by a flame attempting to measure but which cannot exhaust heart's infinite reserve. Aflame and resolutely non-consumable. Infinite mystery of the heart, life and love. All once ensconced in brittle bone frame and fibrous muscle. A pulsing enclave of life, an intimate proximity measured in the resonant impulse of continuous beating: never stopped until all stops.

Gaze relinquishes implement fascination. Upward look continues. Blinding brilliance of light dissipates. Darkness swells, as sympathetic response pupils do to.

Headless! Corrupted death arisen without head. Expectancy of face to face, a living, expressive gaze, met with cold force of absence. Not just arisen, but arisen headless. Gaze jumps back down to groin-skull, still present, still staring. Dead eyes an absence of a different order, hollowed out relic rather than immeasurable absence without approximate form.

No longer visage, no longer elsewhere contesting from expressive form that intervenes, provokes without resolution.

Open wound at neck implores heavens with vertical address. Perhaps a new contortion of profound, troubling relation: decapitated celestial clamour. Without face, yet still radical impropriety of intervention comes. Corrupted arising forming substitute plenum of spilling incommensurable. Infinite finding new form beyond the alien incomprehensible of the face, circumscribed expressivity now denuded, intervention spreads form across expanse of whole body. Thus necessity of recomposition, thus accompanying proclamations from mouths appropriated and

wrenched wide: “Behold Acéphale!” The infinite and its relations of absolution play out across the expanse of this arisen, compound form. Still the intractable comes, overflowing and exposing.

Such traumatic intervention, finding expressivity in a face substitution, implores with the infinite reserve still, yet wrought by a memorial persistence that reconstructs absent visage. The spectral image of a familiar face, cast with the cruel pallor of passing alongside, grafts neck stump with a past-tense adornment. More terrible because drawn from out of the depth of another time, another world. A testament to witnessing of passage, a testament to the prior. Intermittent quality of spectral image leaves a face appearing and disappearing, as if expressive malleability finds a more radical and profound form in the play of visage’s appearance and disappearance.

Coloured by a sediment of remembrances, arisen figure comes as a distorted approach of the other. A traumatic torsion of the imploring approach of dissymmetry, arisen from the violence of a sacred passage.

Standing tall in the clearing, a violation of the other’s most proper imploration: do not kill. Clarity of violation confronts starkly. A sacred overbidding of the approach of the other. A deep stab of the blade to get to the bottom of the infinite, abstraction penetrating the absolute. Such attempts to compromise of the infinite get lost amongst absolution. Infinite always exceeds.

# Blanchot

## *OBELISK*

From the south, heading north, a figure enters the public square. Steps traverse stacked geometries delineating space. Cutting straight across an imaginary edge, the figure enters between two headless statues. Unerringly central, the wandering trajectory described cuts perpendicularly across the line joining the two statues, as if motion driven by an invisible and precise motor force. Statues observe: headless but implacable witnessing.

Figure follows straight-line trajectory, passing slowly and methodically across the concrete plane of the public square below. Moving as if drawn by a relentless force, figure continues, making only minor corrections to the direction of travel when fragments of stone underfoot cause small deviations.

Large chunks and small granular scatterings cover the public square. The remnants of a tip blown off some time past. Slowly ground underfoot as passers-by traipsed through, the remnants of the explosion provide a textural covering over the approach to obelisk. Familiar crunch breaks the silence of the early morning, scattering stuttered accompaniments to progress of steps towards obelisk.

Still figure wanders on. Illustrious and enigmatic, charm of obelisk pulls, directing motion from dead-centre of octagon. Lure beckons. Pulled in ever-closer, strange power of obelisk exposes figure. Stripping back limits, pulling body and destabilising hold of the world. Resistance stripped until power of obelisk takes hold completely.

All the while figure continues wander. Distance diminishes, yet deviations that were once corrected by minor adjustments no longer occur; a sheer indifference to the

scattered debris underfoot leaves figure traversing concrete plane indifferent to disruption.

Steps continue without interruption as course of figure begins to veer, taking a wide arc around the eastern edge of the obelisk. Weak sun of early morning casts pallid light across public square, partially outlining obelisk figure as a dark impression against greyed skies. Course continues to arc, describing a perfect curve that maps a trajectory right around the obelisk to the northern side.

Small brass plaque grabs attention, stopping steady and ceaseless wander, leaving legs still, body motionless. Head cranes down and stares directly at the plaque below. A short inscription: MONUMENT TO BATAILLE.

Reading dispossesses.

Lost, time and world slow.

Words circulate stripped of meaning. Information become hollow inscription.

Empty phrase captivates further: a deep, patient gaze lingers, motionless and waiting.

Silence perpetuates, spaces waiting into a distant reserve partially separated from the world. Strange pallor, world gains a curious opacity. Clouded distance separates as captivation of still-circulating words continues.

Head snaps back, arcing upwards to gaze at skies above. Eyes still lost, captivation by inscription still confounds. Dispossession covers and clouds. Gaze into skies allays nothing, leaving rather the same residual emptiness ringing within a different sphere. Above, below, lost to empty circulation of inscription and enigmatic draw of obelisk.

Skies stared into deeply, indifferently. Nothing yielded, nothing gained. Empty captivation holds. Time waits. Clouds traverse span of arc above, drifting silently across the path of weak sun's light. Radiance occluded, modulated and suppressed by scattering opacity of clouds. Veils disrupt light spread; hollowed out inscription disrupts eye's gaze.

Head arcs back down, locked to the horizontal once again. Eyes stare straight ahead at obelisk. A few steps forward, obelisk swamps. Stone presence fills field of vision, swallows light. Still confounded, gaze lingers.

Eyes travel upwards, following the vertical line of obelisk. Reaching limit of vertical field of vision in such close proximity, body tips back to be able to gaze at the last few feet. Whole body reels, falling backwards.

A slow inversion: head tips first with feet following later.

Then caught.

Held, action paused.

Stopped still mid tumble.

Slowly obelisk takes hold. Lure manipulates body.

Tipped back, held, then body slowly raised, arms fall limply either side, legs drift, bent at the knees. Body as if in slumber lifts off the ground. An improbable, ridiculous encounter.

Body floats. Suspended a foot above ground and still facing obelisk from which backwards tumble began.

### *A gathering*

Obelisk looms large. A pale emblem embossed. Dark contour in the background shows vision of overlapped strikes. Hollow and haunting persistence provides the only

consistent anchor to an otherwise vertiginous tumble of worlds as one strike collapses into another.

Rending blows overlap: lightning strike, cut of blade, obelisk top crumble. Concatenated times proliferate indecision. Tumultuous grounds swallow up then unfold into endless variance.

Lightning bolt strikes tree, collapsing long-standing witness with a cruel blow. Heavenly invective strikes sharply. Such conflagrations of terrestrial and celestial carry strange allure. Visitations not exhorted but given with grace from above.

Blade strikes fleshy protrusion of body, head drops to forest floor. Rending blow struck in spilt night by terrestrial hand. A gesture firmly tied to the ground below but directed wilfully to the heavens above.

A great surge from the ground. Rooted concretion forces upwards. Deific focus channelled to celestial realm. Obelisk shakes, driven by a surging inner force. A once calm, infinitely slow extension to the heavens becomes a frenetic and desperate lurch. A final, glorious hope for a touch of the divine. Surge shoots through full length of obelisk, drawing an intense channel of connection between the foundations buried below stacked geometries and the mute invocations that wrap the whole edifice.

A high-speed misreading. Energetic lurch ignores any lessons that could have been learnt. No interest in a progressive transit of ingrained wisdom, surge jumps right to the point.

Virile force erupts, overwhelms concentrated point of obelisk top. Explosion shatters, stone fragments rain down over the square, sending a chaos of shards over the ordered geometry below. Textural disruptions scatter across smooth concrete plane.

Sovereign reach thwarted. Desolation of ambition, desolation of purpose. Flaccid gesture now lingers some distance below the celestial exhortation that stood clear and concise a moment before. Fragmented top now makes multiple, pathetic gestures upwards.

Blows span time. Gestures overlap. Events cross producing strange admixtures of exhortations to the celestial and terrestrial provocations. All overlaps linked meticulously through the perfect alignment of the strike. An action almost instantaneous, struck with vigour and terrible conviction. Each strike meets with an absolute precision, causing overlap to proliferate from meticulous nexus of rending strike. Sublime potencies locked as one.

All gambled on last motion.

Obelisk fades. Deboss.

A group gathers in forest clearing. One by one assembling around lightning-struck tree stump. A figure steps forward from out of the throng and lays down over the stump. Eyes glare upwards into clear skies above. Stars streak, time passes.

Obelisk looms. Image shifts, a hazy reverie.

Emboss. Obelisk slowly arises from out of scene's background. Two obelisks, one over another, apprehensible only from slightly misaligned overlap, edges unclear. Top missing, top intact. Confusing double. Overlapped images only distinguishable by minor variations in depth.



A sentence drifts. Disembodied, without a correspondent mouth: “I remember a young man ...” Impossible to locate origin, words filling scene as if spoken down from the celestial itself.

Embossment protrudes further.

Suspended at the barrels of a series of guns. Meticulously aligned, ordered according to the rites of an obscure ceremony. Such patterns of doing a palliative for excess. Tyranny reigned in through the austere observance of a practice.

Liberated at the point of looming incertitude. Dismissed out of hand: off, off you go. The mirth of *Vlassov army*, then the loss of decision that overshadows the decisive gesture hastily prepared for. From out of a world distinct, an interruption that never ceases to resonate. Abandoned, left to the disarming familiarity of the forest become strange. Living, as if dead. Abandoned to sovereign indecision. A fragmentary life ensues, borne from out of the trees of the forest: “I remember, I do not.”

Deboss.

Supine sacrificial victim awaits strike. Lightning-scarred tree stump bears weight of body, providing substrate for provocation of repeat strike. In such a pose gestures overlap, an approximation attesting only further to their absolute distinction.

Embossment protrudes, sweeping forth from dark backdrop of forest.

Circle of group witnessing undoes curved geometry, slipping into a straight, regimented line. Guns raised, according to the rules.

Deboss.

Obelisk recedes into forest, leaving only lingering trace on the retina. Group encircled still: motionless, organised, never-moved.

Alongside group wait.

Blade arcs up, gripped tightly between both hands as they move above sacrificer's head. Motion slows as blade reaches apogee, surety of progressing time erodes as distance from body of victim increases. At the very tip of the arc, the dissolution of time is approached asymptotically, slowing infinitely more with each minor gradation of lift. At the unbearable point of time's flaying, an image looms forth.

Embossed dissolution swallows the whole scene of the sacrifice. A rushed, insistent clamour.

"I remember a young man..."

"... then a feeling of extraordinary lightness, a sort of beatitude."

Deboss.

Stab.

Blow incises.

Tip meets flesh with full force of downward plunge. Hilt thuds chest.

Emboss. Obelisk burnt into dark spilt from wound.

"there remained, however, at the moment when the shooting was no longer but to come, the feeling of lightness that I would not know how to translate: freed from life? The infinite opening up?"

“I remember a young man...” A stutter, “I know – do I know it –” equivocal, questioning. Embossed obelisk forces, a confessional pressure, “in his place, I will not try to analyse” ... tailing off, pulled back into the quiet of the square. Such stutters stress: a loss, a dispossession. “Perhaps ecstasy,” the thought, the problem of the dispossession. A vague memory, sharp and puncturing in places but lost mostly amongst the diaphanous. What remembered? What witnesses? What testimony?

Lost, indefinitely, amongst the trees, amongst the charred and smouldering remains of a familiar forest. Time does not pass, but stops and waits, interrupted by incertitude.

“in reality, how much time had elapsed?” Interruption holds wide open, until time clicks back in, “no more ecstasy,” dispossession ungrips, drops back into war soil of forest. “I know, I imagine –” words splutter: “I am alive. No, you are dead.” Address lost, circulating violently, frenetic motion light enough to be set loose with the graze of a word: “the instant of my death henceforth always in abeyance.” Figure calmed –

Deboss.

Strike of blade kills. Event of death drawn out somewhere between the instantaneous incision and the thick darkness of night that spills.

Time distends the moment the tip of the blade makes contact with flesh. As point incises, counts of time spill out into the world with an intense arrhythmia, as if the very mechanism of the count had haemorrhaged. Temporal gap renders killing strike more terrible, no longer the instantaneous event that arrives with brutal and finite punctuality; rather the strike, coming with certitude the moment blade begins its downward trajectory, is drawn out and distorted to the point of lacking certitude because time seems to lose its will to count.

Group gathered to perform sacrifice, an intimate convocation. Each to the other integral for the gesture, not just an act of the sacred in accordance with the two at the heart of the event. Sacrificial relation thus excludes the restrictive intensity of the two locked in a mutual embrace of abandonment. Rather each to the other participate in incommensurable relations of dissymmetry. Intimate convocation of group producing an intensity of relation for which each can take on the burden of the exploded totality of all. The dead-weight of a sacrificial offering.

Dissymmetry of each to all the radical incommensurability of the other. The approach of a question from elsewhere, an absolute and infinite exhortation. From the disarming nudity of this approach, multiplied reciprocally and dissymmetrical across each assembled participant, comes an ethical injunction. An injunction tenebrous and fragile, borne out on the face of the other. An obligation founding a stark emblem in the command not to kill. Unfathomable and implacable persistence of other constitutes an unfolding of this obligation across the clearing, all at odds with sacrificial aim of the assembly awaiting a violation yet to come.

Each to the other separated, open to spontaneity of world. Such measures come to exceed the tired repetition of freedom as a correlate for other's persistence. Such a structure banishes the other to a mere incidence, an incommensurable to be taken or left depending on a measure of freedom always counted upon the self. Freedom as injunction thus measures repeated modalities of the same at the cost of exiling the other to a structure of behest, rather than one who comes as pure caprice, a terrible intervention.

Killing strike violates obligation to other. The relative closeness of each other to God, a proximity of infinitude, finds cruel affirmation in killing strike that shatters and the radical dissymmetry of the other. Sacrificial killing establishes contorted

relation, violating the basic ethical obligation whilst pushing experience of infinitude to a limit that affirms its predominance in structuring death and the singular relation that dying alongside unfolds.

A strange oblivion of the other, killing strike obviates relation. Violence of the sacred violates the prohibition presented by the other. An oblivion brought about through the passion of a strike that exceeds the law.

Once such measure of other's oblivion finds a torsional correlate in the refused possibility of the two of the sacrifice. The intimate communion of the two of lovers manifest as a centripetal compression, oblivion one unto the other. The dizzying descent of locked embrace at the cost of all else. Worlds annihilated in the intensity of a mutual captivation that tries to eviscerate the radical distance of the other in a different register. At the cost of all else passion, exorbitant and outstripping, condemns law to the impersonal injunction.

Two oblivions open a challenge to the incommensurable relation to the other. Two oblivions that abandon the ethical obligation for a limitless passion. Two oblivions thus rupture the order of the other through excess of passion, the caprice of the heart.

Strike of blade, all guarantees lost. The terrible instance of death creeps slowly without the certitude of relentless time, without the certitude of a measured world. Alongside, group experiences this terrible sequence. The incision of the flesh spreads its cruel and clinical character into the forest clearing, cutting limits, slicing relations. Spilling open a space in which certitudes vacillate, throwing the group up against limits presumed infallible but now flayed wide open.

Night spill clouds, masking vision but not the troubling experience of the passage of death.

Tumult.

Dissolving tenacity of spilt night. Without time, without witness or recall. Held as a series of vague textural echoes: muffled silence, weight of dark, choked mouth.

Night opens. Swallows group, but without the warm embrace of intimacy. A sweeping, dispossessive darkness. A night without familiar form, without the caress of darkness with anticipated relent.

Time confounded as measures of the world clash. Intimate count of time spills into the world-historical whilst conflicting with other intimacies.

Dark spill occludes not only the world, but masks too the intimacy of address. The familiar comfort of the *tutoyement* dissipates in the strange formality of spilt night. Alongside slips from intimacy of witnessing into the most proper formal invocation of the dispossessive and the improper. At the limit of propriety a radical dispossession, the brute inadequacy of the intimate and familiar.

Jutting of himself commands formality, a properness of address for the verticality of a stature composed out of the conflict of the unfamiliar.

Night spill forces group outside, into the excess of the incertitude of death in a world where night falls then disperses with a regular intimacy.

Outside reads, dispossesses, traumatises, fragments, opens.

Spilt night, excess. Fall of dark offers inverted vision of other night, night of inessential. Wrapped tight, intense proximity possesses a distance of the alien, beyond the order of haunting but familiar spectral accompaniment: spilt night holds no world-common palliatives. Outside spills and precludes night of the world through the tumultuous dark spilling from sacrificial wound.

Outside comes. Great inversions follow. Ecstatic convulsions render testimony senseless: no time, no witness. Tumult, tumult alone.

Alongside the offering passes. In a parallel and graven form, no longer capable of with, the offering must persist in a world alongside. Such spacing structures the experience of this relation: death always alongside. Separable from the world of certitude, from the world of counting time, death passes as strange world.

Exposure in spilt night throws group against limits. Finitude overpowers as experience allayed, world alongside juts. Parallel world troubles, creating spectral images and leaving residue in a world presumed distinct. Alongside stains, disturbing and colouring world. Such pull conflicts and challenges, opening limits to question from a strange outside.

Alongside persists at a different pace. Resistant to the continuous vagaries of time, alongside takes on a glacial pace, shifts carve deep channels across time that continues to tick. Within glacial structure multiple, parallel paces intersect: granular movement accompanies terrible furies of ice crashing into oceans.

Slow abrasion of earth carves. Great pressures force. Fragments tumble at rapid paces. Glacial motion striated by multiple temporalities and channels of events that overlap. Multiple rates of tumult pass. Alongside carries glacial flow into the world in which time clicks on and on.

Supine body of victim assents to transition alongside the moment it meets the charred wood of the tree stump. Agreement to submit to alongside comes at the cost of the offering of life. Alongside partially passes too through group witnessing. Always the necessity of a parallel position, alongside thus has a dual efficacy that marks either side as in a relation of radical dissimilarity. Group witness the death alongside, victim dies alongside. In this transit of alongside finitude is exposed and shared.

A relation to another established then violated in the split-second of blade strike. In the briefest moment of transition a connection appears before a terrible transformation instantly undoes. Relation leaves a residue, the persistence of alongside. The lingering tremor of a parallel passage assures a connection even after the desolating event. Relation established then violated holds across group who witness alongside. From one to another, witnessing group come to be exposed in this relation. Not as a proliferation of some special privilege, the ritual is an impoverished approximation, rather group are exposed merely through the banality of a death alongside. No exaltation of the waste of life, just the brute fact of the experience.

A relation exposed forcefully because a relation denied. Alongside marks a seam, a transitional passage that emphatically restates relation by exposing the side of its failure.

Alongside one another, group witness; alongside stated and emphasised. Alongside appears without emblazoned emphasis of deathly strike in constitution of group. Each alongside another, a relation of similarity between marked by an always excessive and radical dissimilarity.

Beside oneself finds timorous vocalisation in stammering mouth. Hesitant alongside, mute supplication. The voicing of the intimate address stuck, faltering on the tip of the tongue. Impropriety withholds familiar address.

Alongside, dying or otherwise, unmasterable exteriority. At least two economies of dissymmetry revealed: the killing strike's brutal exposure, the capricious volition of an approach without invitation. Each a testament to infinitude in whatever starkness of measure.

Address without intimacy, only the most rigid and vertical of formalities apposite. Yet a formality always betrayed by the stammering of intimate desire. A



mélange of address, always hesitant, slipping into and out of registers. Sobbing, convulsed speech responsive to mortal passage, stammer formed around slippage of properness.

Debilitating infinitude of relation evades a mode of address originating from the presumption of symmetrical structuring. The same speaks as the same: confident, meaningful, the most proper of intents. Yet words slip when the rule of intimacy falters, when only a rigid formality can occupy a position of a once-tight proximity of speaking. The supplication to speak now carries an injunction for a different order, a different register no longer structured on the same but drawn out of a pattern of dissymmetry. A speech necessarily plural, a speech embracing the faltering and hesitant condition of alongside: never enough, never complete. A speech not so much interrupted by the stammer of impropriety, but constituted by it as its only mode of address.

Speaking into the darkness, a desperate ploy committed to an enjoinder without reciprocity. Words stammered and spat into darkness. All the while mouths filled, a choking silence.

Alongside, a series of relations that intersect but cannot overlap. From one participant witness to another, a transmuted version of the sacrificial dispossession plays out. A persistence outside and alongside, always raising the question of this alongside.

Surety of persistence vacillates in the lure of the question, but the penetration of the blade generates a seismic re-calibration of the terms and the response that meets it. The brutal puncture of the question is mapped in the accelerating downward trajectory of the blade and the precise but furious incision of the chest. Dull thud as hilt meets ribs provides emphatic final statement, the question relayed in motion,

answer awaited with anticipation after bone-dull thump. Resonance of chest cavity offers muted imploration. Thud softens and disappears quickly: answer still awaited.

Sacrificial death thus restates a familiar exhortation, a common question that waits in the subsurface of existence. Implied in alongside, but without the provocative flourish of death. Such questions are thus asked and re-asked in the face of existences presumed sufficient. But the continuing provocation of the question points merely to the fallacy of the presumption of sufficiency. Alongside, tacit acknowledgment of such a question. Foregrounded, this tacit component opens and recalibrates the whole conception of alongside. Blade strike, one such emphatic foregrounding. Persistent asking unfolds a continuous series of demands that perforate the presumption of sufficiency. Each and every time a question arises from outside. Asked not in a pernicious form, but as a caress or inquisition of care, the question comes from elsewhere, opening implicitly through its stating a relation that is at base insufficient.

Alongside establishes a patterning of finitude. An each time series of relations correlated around an exposure to an unknown. Even within the presumptive comfort of the affiliation of the sacrificial group, well-worn friendships offer just one more testament to alongside.

Finitude is an each time exposition, proliferating within the scene of the sacrifice in multiple registers, from the emphatic blade strike to the calmness of old friends. Alongside is thus patterned around a whole mutuality of finitude, a mutuality that must be elucidated around a series of existences insufficient at heart. Such insufficiency as exposed in alongside is not filled once the acknowledgement of a lack breaks through from the persistent asking of the question; rather such insufficiency is met alongside with another insufficiency, once again exposed. Such a pattern is not additive or premised on desire as a fulfilment; insufficiency maintains itself in relation

to another insufficiency, be it the friendship of another or the graven testament to the sacrificial act that lies within a thick cloud of night. Friendship or death are not oppositional structures of alongside, but merely differential qualities articulated around a common theme.

Insufficiency of existence is thus maintained even in the reach of friendship, even in the caress of love. Without desire to be filled, such an insufficiency points towards a sharing that does not complete. Insufficiency doesn't operate on a principle of reciprocity, a one to another mutuality, which would simply be another pattern of the same. Dissymmetrical relation is mutual exposition of a lack incommensurable, an absolute insufficiency that finds not positive affirmation but the faint glimmer of another intractable insufficiency elsewhere, exposed also and for which nothing can be done. Shared abandon, each time distinct because each time resolutely singular and unapproachable.

Alongside, a relation of torsions, each pulling around the insufficient, cast outwards without an attempt to draw back in. These relations are predicated on a wrapping around or grasping for an unknown which is, precisely because also insufficient, a common and acknowledgeable unknown. Withdrawn, reserved, but open. Torsion is constituted by a series of relations that are dissymmetrical despite their ostensible existence as relations of the same, relations of one insufficient existence to another. Insufficiency not a pattern of completion, but rather always a distinct lack. Insufficiency appears as a cavernous reserve, withdrawn from the world because unknowable, but providing indications of its existence precisely by declaring just such an unknown.

Within the occlusive darkness of spilt night a whole pattern of alongside is held. Insufficiencies are exposed through a scale of provocations, from the most distant to the most close.

Each time of alongside, exposure of finitude. Heavy occlusion of spilt night marks. Sensory deprivation spreads. Eyes stream. Mouths choke. Spill from wound spreads, an insufficiency radically exposed. Act of sacrifice opens whole body to world. An exposure not just of the insufficient, but an exposure of the very heart of life and its nervous receptivity.

Stab of blade through flesh, into the chest cavity and pulsing heart, fills insufficiency with a coldness that further exposes lack. Night spills and confounds from wound responsible for the passing and exposure of an extremity of finitude.

All choked. Insufficiency sprawls. Hollowing out, overwhelming, darkness covers and meets alongside as a series of proximal unknowns, exposing further the each time of alongside to the vagaries of finitude.

Eyes clouded by tears. Ears muffled and mouth choked by heavy darkness. Words spoken get lost in the buccal cavity, resonant between soft palette and tongue, but moving no further than the inside edge of the front teeth. Lost in the mouth, speech disintegrates in an internalised resonance. Such happenings debilitate, enforced mutism restating the potent principle of insufficiency right at the heart of the motivation of speech. Garrulous proclivity falters, unable to leave on its usual outward trajectory. Finitude of communication forcefully exposed in the repeat failure of speech within the dark shroud of spilt night. Exposure of finitude more forceful in the immediate occlusion of sacrificial aftermath. One more exposition, one more common operation rendered troublingly clear in the darkness of spilt night.

All moments of sacrificial scene state a common concern with outside. An exterior unknown, unattainable even in the closest of proximities, unattainable even in the heights of the charged intimacy of the hand that plunges the blade into the body of another. The connection of a life taken, a life offered, and the strange interplay of substitution in the face of death, still ultimately unfold onto the tiny reserve of the ungraspable that resists all the way to the end of a life and beyond.

Alongside one another the group witness, taking on the sacrificial death as an obligation to be shared up until the point intimacy loses its grip and the distribution of world slips into incertitude. Contestation plays out in the continued tension of alongside, coming to a height in deathly strike. The sacrifice not necessary for exposure of outside, but comes to function as an accelerant, hastening the proliferation of the pressing question.

Alongside stages an intimacy of insufficient existences. In the face of sacrifice intimacy is heightened as limits are struck wide open and the enclosure presupposed by intimacy turns out to be an inhibitive structure. Alongside the sacrifice the space of intimacy opens, insufficiency made all the more deep the more it is exposed to another. Intimacy spills over limits. A tiny amount spreads, its smallness measuring out a great intensity that has no reliance upon proximity. Such spilling shows the low viscosity of the intimate as it foams over boundings. Denuding frictive resistance, intimacy gives a *glissando* quality to relation, finding a stark parallel in the almost frictionless strike of blade through subcutaneous muscle and tissue. Minor resistances disrupt course, but the steady and relentless progress of blade into body exposes an image of the intimate as an almost effortless motion beyond limit. Thus the night that spills from the puncture of the blade draws in those alongside, forming an intimate couching for the group witnessing by choking orifices disruptive of intimate *glissando*. Speech

disrupts flow with its buccal, staccato interjections. Eyes divide and space. Darkness closes, opening an intimate relation stitched into the group alongside through the open wound in the chest.

Life split, night spilt. Blade rends flesh. A great rupture cracks silently through the clearing as life is taken. Shared out within the clearing is the act of a mutual supplication to the power of death. A willed submission to the strike of the blade, an imploration for taking on a death too. Such a game of mortal substitution splits life wide open, exposing through the strike a rift that runs deep.

What comes from life rent wide is a parallel and dispelling form of communicative exigency. Night spilt pulls singular existences into a terse relation of mutual insufficiency. The dissimilarity of each alongside rendered more starkly through the communicative spilling of night as a common sensory tissue rather than in the starkness of a life taken. Communication thus measures more terribly the radical incommensurability of lives insufficient than the act of instantiating death, which merely displays a common and intimate mutuality of mortal imminence.

The killing strike, as a reading. Sacrifice offered to the world as a work taken apart by the labour of the strike. Perverse parallel plays out and highlights an important function of sacrifice: to kill without production, to act outside the world of expenditure. The demand thus to perform a sacrifice that would be more than a mere parody of the world and its productive obsessions. Sacrificial gesture must refute work to carry full force into world, removing the gesture from the grip of a repeatable and mobilisable operation.

Killing strike as gesture of reading pulls corpse into unworking. Suspending the proposition of a complete life by dispelling the end of bodies to the unimaginable and ongoing. The continuous overlap of two decomposing persistences leaves body as

an incomplete proposition, continually traversed and re-traversed by the killing strike of blade.

Right at the heart of the clearing, the sacrificial strike must resist the lure into work, otherwise operational centre would link to cascade of iterable gestures connected to world of clear night. A whole overlapping network of productive action pulled into the clearing, dispelling perversion and excess, recuperating the transgressive blow into a structured and rationalised relation. Strike that rends head from body drawn into a logic alien to its function. Pernicious and pervasive systems even pull in transgressions that cut down to the bone of their presupposition.

Taking a life could make a work, strike simply recuperated into system of production. One more gesture producing in the world. Such a problematic exposes sacrificial gesture and sacrificial ambition to becoming mere parody. A calamitous and doomed attempt to exceed the strictures of the world.

Witnessing sacrifice, group complicit, bound up in the logic of the killing and its exorbitant circulation that's eventually drawn back into regular orbit. The ritual strike of the blade not enough to decouple the action from the lure of work. Thus exposing the whole structure to the very logic it tries to resist. Such thought thus begins to unpick the event. Group, sacrifice, communal sharing, all provocative but absorbed. Stuck in the world of production as a vacillating and failed ambition for something otherwise.

Instant night spills, parodic supposition undone.

Insufficiency pools in world as dark night clouds productive ambition in a great haze. Dark night swallows, occludes and renders productive desire ineffective by removing illusions of sufficiency. Instead night spreads in a thick cloud the incisive and pressing question of an outside. The challenge of another, the formation of

alongside, all find heightened form in dark night. Insufficient pooling resists work through a proposition of alternate economy: no longer a space desirous of completion, but an emptying out, a spacing that merely further incompletes when met with a reciprocal recognition. Such insufficiencies empty out work, rendering each attempt at drawing in to a system of relations a flaccid gesture. In spilt night resistance abounds, limiting the work-logic of the world to small, desperate grasps.

Head chopped in dark night. Unclear how or by whom. A great undecidable. Gesture cleaves the rational, drops it down to humus of forest floor. Just another debasement played out in occlusive dark.

Head from body emphatically states separation. But separation carries more subtle necessities than the escape from the rational jurisdiction of the protuberant head. Cleaving strike trashes immanent recuperation, splitting the logic of absorptive identification, first by spilling insufficiency as an occlusive night, then by the post-mortem chop of the head under the cover of darkness.

Spill of insufficiency clogs up logics of connection, cause, production, leaving an occlusive night of impossibility in which the possible relents momentarily. Collapsing structures, spilt night provides blanket of resistance to work-dominant tendency. Whilst night occludes, actions take place insulated from relentless recuperation of daylight clarity.

Death spills as night. Insufficiency pools and spreads into world. Such a spilling interrupts death, holding the final moment in a cloudy suspension dispersed amongst the clearing. Death held, lost in the indecision of a darkness that flays distance, holds time, rends and inverts bodies. Inconsequence of work found in spilt night, lost and left to circulate in a continual and uneven distribution alongside.



Indecision of death and spill of insufficiency hold across span of clearing whilst head chop occurs. Gesture of rational refusal comes as mere punctuation, barbaric and inconsequential. Emphasis distorted by terrible act, but precedence given to distention from spilt night. Waiting in darkness, group inverted. Tumbling through motions of folding, clashing. Alongside, a tumult. Questions incise subject, shattering.

Time waits.

### *Arisen*

Twitch of corpse hits group like a bullet, jarring the world, forcing wide open. Incertitude of death given stark and apparent form as a small and intense gesture crushes the surety of its passing. Death interrupted. Incompleted as if sent back from another world.

Embossment ranges and swallows with the urgency of the twitch. Affirmation of life sends overlapped worlds tumbling.

Forest, a memory, a voice: "I remember a young man."

Another motion, less convulsed.

Deboss.

Twitches build into complex motion approximating life, whilst forest re-affirms its persistence in clear night. Shadows lighter, more intimate.

Incertitude of death given a stark form as being arises. A clear vacillation, death still held. Unclear existence stands before group, an existence uncertain, of potent insufficiency.

A living entombment, headless being stands tall in clearing illuminated by celestial light. Such a sight gives disorganisation of death a bizarre embodiment: corruption standing tall, bathed in starlight.

Arising unworked. An embodiment of work undone, held wide open. Strike of blade through chest incises, leaving a gap. Body split and traversed by a blow continuing to resonate through span of time following sacrifice. Resonance carries through as indecision, a ringing, harmonic residue from blade strike. Incision opens gap in work. Knife strike reads body of victim, a thorough and incisive inquisition. Precise strike releases dark and occlusive spill that traverses the whole body and undoes the simple assurance of a completion.

A torsion of relation pulls right through the resonant strike, drawing the body into a complex configuration that constantly re-articulates and re-draws the effectivity of the strike.

Alongside thus finds its most extreme exemplar in this indecision ringing through the body. A ringing in close proximity to other friends who ask the same question silently.

Death incomplete. Stuck in the arising of a body without clarity of appellation: dead, living, stuck, dying. Death trapped in telescopic distension of arising body. Night clears and from veil of darkness stands a terrible sight: headless, arisen.

Strike of blade sets death loose into an infinite regression. Spiralling inwards, death knots and bores, an ever-tightening stricture. The puncture of the blade forced down to the hilt never reaches deep enough to kill emphatically. Each gesture towards death thwarted at the last by an implacable resistance. Each and every time finality of death allayed, finding its perverse incapacity rendered most clearly when out from under dark veil comes a headless arising. Incisions, decapitations, never enough.

Strikes always fall short of certitude. Hesitancy of death finds embodiment in headless arising, a potent resistance standing tall and affirmative.

Body arisen, a bridge between worlds, an emblem of resistance. Arising, emphatic statement of corruption. The incertitude of death given a stark form, whilst the certitude of death from another world is pulled into the world of the clearing.

Emboss. Obelisk surge.

“I know – do I know it –” stammering voice, hesitant testimony. Ecstasy collapses time and witness.

“Dead – immortal”

Incertitude looms.

Great interruption catches: cessation of life, unreachable end of death.

Deboss.

Worlds knot in headless arising, a tangled point of indecision. Unworking because without clear world in which to work.

Sacrificial gesture at centre of clearing thus sets loose a great unworked embodiment that in the very moment of arising moves back through the temporal lineage of the world of the sacrifice, picking apart the links of time that lead to the moment where the sacrifice was articulated as purposive.

Arisen sacrifice, sacrifice re-read. Unworking of disparate corpus of praxis. Held in bodily arising, unworking gesture overflows incorporeality to leave a tatty and hesitant composition of body at the centre of the sacrificial moment.

Arisen, headless. Resplendent seat of vision and thought dispatched to forest floor. Body arisen begins to recompose. Head reclaimed from forest floor, blade sets

to work cleaning living excesses. Flesh flayed from skull. Meticulous scraping leaves pocked-bone exposure. Aired at last.

Stood, a lean forward, skull meets groin, moment of fusion.

Looming forth from groin-head stare obelisk asserts. Emboss.

“Sovereign elation? ... the encounter of death with death?” Motions of recomposition after arising confound. Distended far from comfort of body-complete, resections trouble.

“A great lightness,” all lost after abatement of looming incertitude of death. One part, all parts, liberated into forest. “Surreptitious friendship,” drifting relation, exilic wander. Between familiar trees certainty slips, promise of looming incertitude disappears. Limbo of common ground, familiarity troubles whilst time disperses amongst the trees.

Deboss.

Head recovered. Minor recuperation of excluded part, but with necessary modifications. Exclusionary gesture pulled back in, necessary parts reintroduced to bodily composition in a new configuration. No longer just incorporation disorganised but re-configuration extends to the recovery of worked gestures into a chaotic embodiment. Decapitating gesture drawn back into bodily proximity, exclusionary chop no longer allowed to run away with itself as a decisive and imperious act. Chop held to account through re-attachment, and then recovered into a new place. Body reconfigured for transit of worlds; body reconfigured as resistance to sovereign gesture.

Height of disorganisation given strange form as body recomposes. Head stripped, fused to groin. Heart torn out aflame. Flesh incised, intestines exposed. Two celestial accompaniments cut free from skies. Each gesture recomposes decomposing form, disorganising further the chaotic structure in the centre of the clearing. Conflict leaves all certitudes lost. Body become replete with distending and interrupting accoutrements. Parts not clearly comprehensible, abandoned rather to a tropological structure: intestine-labyrinth, burning-heart expiation. Disorganisation cascades relational structures into the world of alongside, witnesses grapple for coherent patterns for re-telling but modifications resist. Stars, intestines, flaming heart, scraped-clean skull, blade, all unwork.

Noble bearing of disorganised body. Head missing. Chest incised. Lost between worlds, impossibility of clear predication. Parts recomposed, disorganisation continues.

Alongside mouths stutter. Half-formed pronouns tumbling across the lips. He. She. It. They. Moments of designation shatter upon meeting disorganised entombment.

“Behold Acéphale!”

Words slip out of stupefied mouths, a surprise utterance breaking through. Impact of designation brands Acéphale.

Suspended, articulation of sacrificial act stands and holds fascination. Right at the centre of the clearing the arising articulates all. Alongside patterned around, death held, celestial light above gazes down.

Work lodged, lost between worlds. Sacrifice exposed as a series of gestures constituted by the grasping, half-blind motion towards uncertainty, towards the only-glimpsed potency of an act with an absurd and destructive efficacy: no god waits for

this. The work of man more incomprehensible, more capable of the absurd, the petty. Sacrifice thus does not find a crystallisation of its gesture in the relent of supine offering, but finds it rather in the chaotic strike that deceives the logic of work by presenting itself as a clean-cut, coherent and effective structure.

Determinations flayed wide open the moment night spills, engulfing the clear logic of work. A whole series of absurd, disorganising happenings spread and build into the astonishing arising of a figure of world-transit incapable of being properly addressed.

Profound inversion occurs as man strikes right into the heart of man to beget new godhead. No longer the sacrificial gesture of man reclaiming salvation mistaken as a punitive manoeuvre, but man begetting godhead through the absurdity of a gamble with unforeseen end.

Sacrificial strike doesn't measure out parodic form, rather strike grasps the great danger of parody and continues regardless. A desperate gesture, a desperate invocation grasping for another centre of articulation.

Sacrificial strike reads body, reads alongside. Strike in the centre of clearing incises whole body as a drastic and liberated reading.

Alongside patterned by contestation as obfuscating night spills and draws out a more pressing proximity.

Each moment of enactment of strike reads and re-reads scene of sacrifice. Contesting all structures of engagement, sacrificial strike flays open confused lineage of sacrifice, flays open too work structure by undoing end. Pure waste of life celebrates excess, foregrounding resistance to productive structure. Yet still pervasive work structure grips, such gestures not radical enough. Contorting, slipping, work structure resists simple evasions, pulling itself through even excesses, determining waste as

simply one more work, not systemic overflow but just another part, another simple work made from excess realised. Yet work falters when structures collapse into chaotic incertitude. Without-world confounds work by pulling through the incomprehensible, the inassimilable. Sacrifice conforms to pattern of work up until the point where night spills and simple correspondences are overwhelmed in the dark. Proximity persists, is heightened, but occlusion rends participants alongside, tipping them into configurations that exceed the logic of work. Disembodied, tipped outside, strictures of work no longer hold as limits collapse and simple correspondences buckle under weight of darkness. Strange configurations resist, until night clears and the whole lot is dispelled anyway in the instant of Acéphale arising. At this point all work stops: held, lost, disposed of in an arising that embodies unworking.

Recomposed, Acéphale stands. Imperious, compromised body stops still, as if desirous of reverence. A long pause, then off, off into the clear night of the forest. A moment later skies streaked by light ascending.

### *Celestial*

Up, up into heavens Acéphale goes. Ever skyward ascent from earth to mythic skies. Heavens rent, then swallowed whole. Acéphale ascends, then disappears into heavenly abyss. Soon return the placid night skies, littered with celestial bodies: calm vision of furious energy.

Ascent of Acéphale into celestial leaves streaked trail across starlit canopy. Acéphale disappears slowly amongst the scattered light of the heavens, until barely discernible glimmer is all that remains. Indistinct, celestial ascent of Acéphale leaves just one more witness on high, just one more light cast down over sacrificial scene.

Necks craned up, backs arced, feet planted, group witness celestial ascent alongside. Sacrificial begetting leaves scene behind, yet proximity persists. Inciter of rending lost, but not without moments of influence still.

Contorted posture of group slowly relents. Heads arc back down. Eyes stare straight ahead at the obelisk in front, locked to the horizontal once again. Gazes meet momentarily on horizontal of looking, suddenly locked across now empty stump still waiting at centre of clearing. Linked strikes resonate still, one final overlapping connection provoked by upwards trajectory of Acéphale. The celestial firmly knotted through single point of terrestrial.

Above Acéphale ventures, glimmer now eclipsed by starlight multiplicity.

Trajectory of Acéphale carries disorganising corpus into starry firmament. Acéphale travels forth, a begotten godhead unworking span of skies, cutting through starlight transits. Acéphale, a re-energised lightning bolt shot back up to the heavens from the earth below. Man's retort. Strikes align to articulate a duel between span of heaven and grounds of earth. Skies streaked by trajectories of blows traded, scars persist briefly as scattered trails of light.

Ascent of Acéphale completes circuit of celestial and terrestrial strikes and severances. Acéphale, the confounding sacred turned back upon itself: interminable, incessant. Sacred lost in time through interpolation of heavens. Sempiternal continuity: cycle of sacred material, looping through heavens and earth.

Strike of blade into heart of victim draws in another circuit of the cycle, collapsing momentarily the heavens to the earth through the crystalline figure of the blade. Puncture sets free resonant strikes of indefinite time past. Harmonic resonances dispel the profane ordering of the world, situating such a stage in a broader economy of relations. Profane: a plateau of celestial ecstasy.



Strike thus momentarily collapses everything to a single point. The whole world of the profane and the whole world of the sacred can be found for just a fraction of a second in the very tip of the blade. World contagion glints as reflected starlight, all shining before the force of the strike collapses the whole delicate edifice, knotting together worlds in terrible confusion of dark night. All occluded.

Acéphale accedes to heavens as gift of unworking. Presented to the celestial, Acéphale carries earthly disruption as poisoned offering. Imperfection, incertitudes, indecision travel with Acéphale into the heavens, realm of inviolate.

Disruption become transcendent, skies above subject to disruptive reading by Acéphale. Interrogation intervenes, carrying mode of unworking deep into the operational structures of the celestial.

Acéphale, begotten, unworks celestial.

### *Myth worlds*

Acéphale waits.

Sacrificial blade on ground, gripped by legs at either end. A bridge between worlds. Artefact of begetting appropriated by Acéphale, then carried into the heavens: awaited retort finally delivered. Implement of undoing carried far into celestial, an alien context for conflicted terrestrial object. Braced by feet, held tight either end, crude memento carries sentiment through. A treasured object. Carried forth as instrument of unworking, blade transmutes in contagious parallel of Acéphale recomposing, shifting from incisive dagger to elongated sword.

Heart now clenched tight between both hands, held forth from chest in a strange symmetry that emphasises its incongruity: fire of life burning outside. Supplication offered to empty skies above, the dense inessential held forth.

Time passes.

Acéphale arises. Stepping up onto mountain top, before tipping to the side, left leg held out into stormy skies for counter-balance. Arms held wide apart, a splayed exposition of body unworked. Incertitude stands thus, taking the form of a god on high: febrile, dominant, commanding worship. Perversely recomposed, incertitude haunts all gestures, leaving the bluster of dominion shot through with a vacillating, hollow quality. All gestures unworked.

Off in flight, Acéphale takes to the skies. Ascent led by heart and blade, instruments of begetting carving new path once again. Through clouded skies Acéphale flies until dropping suddenly to raging seas below. One long stride after another carries Acéphale across water, a curious meeting of muscular freneticism and lightness of foot that doesn't break water's surface.

March continues onto land, no need any longer for water-walking grace. Dark skies swell behind Acéphale as mythic venture continues.

Dropping to one knee, rich intoxication of storm overtakes supplicant Acéphale. Godhead at behest of capricious world. March become ecstatic, venture passes oracle whose quiet invocations corrupt and tease. A clamour to please comes with lure and enrapture. A convocation of ecstasy from mute stone channelling height of mythic potency.

Chaotic unworking of myth. Dionysiac appropriation. Acéphale dispossessed in ecstatic convulsions of Dionysiac ritual, even in godhead guise.

Blade pierces chest, repeat incision spills night once more. Strike spills night but death does not take hold. Spill swells and darkens already-torrid world, adding

further chaos to the frenzy of eruptions and dark clouds of smoke. A heady mixture of the bowels of the earth and excess of Acéphale spilt into world.

In repeat strike, death re-configured. No longer a killing blow in mythic world, strike incises flesh of empty chest, spilling night and only night into the already chaotic tumult. No longer a heart to wrench free, just night spilling from cavernous chest.

Great edifices collapse in frenzy, temple columns crumble, carved exhortations across stone facades crack and lose semblance. Oracle influence wanes as dark night spreads. Structures crumble through spill's pervasive swallow. A snatch pulls crumbling column close to Acéphale, held tight in crook of arm. Fallen edifice grasped close, testimony to imperious standing of Acéphale.

Darkness swells, occludes all. Silence spreads, the impression of frenzy choked, overwhelmed rather than allayed. Muffled ejections from mouths stuffed full of night dissipate as spill spreads and thickens more fully. All gestures lost to spill. World calmed under blanket of heavy night. Strange, reverential potency of Acéphale when struck into with blade.

Night begins to dissipate. Two blazing eyes appear in darkness, shining as if stars in night. Thunderous sound builds from darkness, calm gives way to clamour of world shaking. Tremors spread.

Furious eyes blaze, rampant from out of chaos of night. Bullhead pierces darkness, eyes glare forwards still: terrible dead-centre stare unremitting. Acéphale, new visage. Bullhead looks intently from once open wound of neck.

Met face to face, bullhead fury shatters and rends. Look comes with force of ecstatic convulsion. Profound dissymmetry throws relation wide open. Troubling encounter finds stark form in bullhead stare: dead eyes penetrate.

Disruption comes with shock of face to face, heightened by recomposed visage. Terrible hybrid marks complexity of transition, from terrestrial to celestial a visage appropriated and brought into view of the world. From out of ecstatic frenzy recomposition arises once more.

Furies shatter and break. In clamour Acéphale finds visage anew. Arising from clouds and knots of bodies to reconfigure a world once more with the glare of bullhead eyes. Appearing from occlusion with the force of a blade into the heart. Penetration of gaze incises, cuts deep into surety.

In maelstrom, bullhead doubles. Two visages now stare. A gaze cast forwards, a gaze cast backwards. Dead-eye looking traverses past and future, deep-staring Janus head. Profound dissymmetry of bullhead given troubling symmetrical replication, forming a more potent dissymmetrical gaze that searches horizons front and back.

Confrontation confounds, opening worlds through the troubling presence of two heads.

Frenzy continues.

Night falls once again. Terrible occlusion, all black.

Waiting, waiting.

Occlusion dissipates, Acéphale gone.

Bullhead rests. New visages chopped in occlusive spill.

Acéphale disappeared, off into other realms.

Cycle begun again.

New-found resonance disrupts homology of three strikes, opening up the harmonic distension, causing ring of intoxication to cease.

Obelisk loses lure.

Body drops, limp, to concrete ground.

Fall completed.

Obelisk ceases. Figure left collapsed supine on concrete plane below, sprawled, surrounded by scattered stone debris. Weak sun continues motion through sky, arcing around the southern face of the obelisk whilst figure lies supine across concrete plane, repose caressed by motions of shadow. A strange parallel, once more dropped into the world.

# Return

## OBELISK

Thirty years later a return. Obelisk still stands, resistant to vicissitudes of time's wear. Tall and resplendent in shatter still. A tip unrestored, memento of explosive ambition. A strange mournful linger accompanies sight of top cut short. Thirty years a gesture maintained, an exhausted and hopeless ambition. Thirty years a wait. Fragments reach, more worn, more tired but still dutifully observant. Celestial grasp continued through years, unrelenting and uninhibited by impoverished situation. A testament to the enduring clamour for realms distinct from the telluric anchor pulling at the feet, drawing the head down to the making-do of horizontal looking. Obelisk grasp persists.

From the north, heading south, a return. Footsteps follow faint tracings. Hesitant, half-remembered flashes return to dictate perhaps-correspondences that come to overlay the public square with a whole history just recalled. Chance reactivations step by step, resounding similitudes cascade from vague maps of correspondence.

Passing of time loses distant quality, enlivened and reinvigorated by return. Wander takes on the form of a punctual re-visitation. In places a direct re-enactment, homology of steps link through time. Perfect placement, identical coincidence. Lineaments re-engaged, two trajectories become intertwined as steps progress. From the north, heading south, meticulous alignment in places gives way to drift of inaccurate memory. The same stuttered curve drawn out in rough form across concrete plane, avoiding long-dispersed remnants from obelisk-top explosion. Trajectory now a terribly strange form, a wandering, unstable progress with the character of an internalised game, a strange compact without rationale or accomplice. Trajectory is governed by the lure of distant and forgotten steps thirty-years prior.

A return across a path well-worn, across a time that maintains a pressing distance. An imperative refutation across span: never the same, always each time anew.

Lure now weaker, mitigated by the distance of time. Force hindered by the memorial conflict tracing a path that intervenes from time past into the currency of progressive wander.

Time-weathered pull lacks potency. Draw without unrelenting vigour, this time missing the full complicity of body entranced.

Difficult to recall pathways. Not just a temporal chasm, but an adjusted disposition from previous draw too. A lure that pulled and dispossessed, a vacant moment left: null point of memory that loses track of steps taken, of body and its intense investment in the charm of obelisk. Another time, another kind. A body otherwise, lured into a dispossession that blanked memory, destroyed testament and dispatched it into the anonymity of another body, another experience.

Trajectory continues whilst diffuse lure spreads further into the world, no longer an intense and irresistible pull to obelisk stood tall, but rather a thinly spread inclination, an appeal across great swathes of space and counts of time. Invocation or summons persists as background noise, a dull but still clamorous appeal for a return across the spans of time since unfolded. An injunction for reflection, for return, for engagement anew.

The same insistent quality plays across celestial reach and the horizontal lure of the engaged figure. Still unremitting in purpose, weakness in draw does not diminish purposive gesture: still the flail upwards, still the entrance and the inwards pull. Step by step figure re-approaches. Weak lure wraps delicate entreaties around body's return.

Body comes close to obelisk without full enrapture, a now softened chasm that accosts rather than fully appropriates. Coercion rather than hypnotic command. Lure tired over span, reach fatigued through decades of entrance. Figure thus gains complicity in motion, a knowing but still unresisted wander towards obelisk and its absurd ever-reaching.

Wander continues across stacked geometries of concrete plane. Long-forgotten inlaid plaque carries a now barely legible inscription. The care of previous decades no longer bestowed, disposed of in favour of time's accretions. A deep patina, thick dirt of years passed obscures lettering, under it all remains the faint traces of inscription:

NUM N TO B TAIL

Obelisk still stood. A perverse, inappropriate permanence of emblem for the very embodiment of the everlasting's disdain. The flailing celestial ambition that shatters top perhaps only appropriate legacy. A tremble, formed into an explosive trajectory, destroying and forgetting itself in the very motion of its anticipated liberation. An almost self-immolation, failed as all terrestrial gesture should in the imperfection of its grasp towards the celestial. A fitting tribute to adorn the stone-heavy permanence of obelisk body.

Obelisk, perverse concentration of unworking. Shifting accretion of materiality, of time witnessed and forgotten. A monolith stood tall, shooting up to the heavens with corrupted reach: tip exploded.

Force of unworking approximated in gesture of tall-standing: unrequited striking-up.

Obelisk gathers. A repository of unworking, of strikes from elsewhere. Knotted up as times-past hesitations, strikes find a persistent and absolutely improper



form in the enduring remembrance of obelisk. Given concretion, a monolithism unbecoming, mere forces of convulsion are gathered and correlated around monument. Total impropriety, the assurance of form for the formless and spasmodic, attested to through a historical persistence that is absolutely improper and yet precisely the right form. Obelisk, a gathering and correspondence for that which unworks: the improper and unexpected.

Composition of monolith draws in searing intervention of lightning bolt, a celestial impartation. Held close as an inverse form of heavens-bound reach of obelisk top now thwarted.

A penetrative thrust into the aerated space between earth and heavens above. Strike of blade stabbing deep finds formal inversion in the upside-down striking of obelisk. As if the blade pulled out of the body then addressed to the heavens as a fearless provocation.

Obelisk lure knots strange anamnesis of lives lived and lives not. A memorial repository that transits world as a collator of the dispossessed. Fragments gathered in the strange material assertions of unworking are caught as obelisk, caught in a state of infinite slowness.

Obelisk, convulsion calmed and allayed. Not stopped then held, but drawn out into a count of time that renders the unworked convulsion into a stood-tall persisting as if timeless. Obelisk, an out of time monolith. A vertical composite of the strange carrying a hypnotic and intoxicating quality. Fascination and allure of obelisk stature: out of time persistence, and the convulsion captured then infinitely slowed. An entrancing, tremulous capture. All approach through lure. Infinitely distended unworking dispossesses. The grace of obelisk persistence draws in with the curious beckoning of the heterogeneous. An excrescent part, waiting in an infinite deferral.

Obelisk explosion, a paroxysm ever-coming, surpassing a threshold of unworked convulsion that tips over into explosion of top. Scattered fragments across public square spread as a diffuse network of unworking charm. Small scale parts carry through the persistence of unworking in a newly intensified register. Broken up, unworking gains a greater range of function. Tiny, intense convulsions accompany the infinitely slow cycle of obelisk convulsion. All now caught once again in obelisk enrapture, a long drawn-out paroxysm of another cycle of unworking.

Each time obelisk collates. An ecstatic appropriation of other trembles from elsewhere, crossed and pulled in, appropriated as another past. Mnemosyne's radiance corrupted, darkened with the contagion of a heavy and occlusive night, the convulsion of daylight clarity.

Site of allure, hypnosis, transposition and unworking, obelisk compounds a series of times, lived and unlived, memorialised and forgotten. Obelisk a site of tremble transposed into drawn out wavelength. The low, inaudible rumble of almost-infrequency. Obelisk imparts tremble, a great quiet intervention, the trembling unknown, site of ingress. Vibrato slowed as convulsion trapped and held as infinitely slow. Two measures given form in common configuration: the cut-short celestial grasp.

Bataille's monumentation still mocks. The endurance of a farce, a terrible misappropriation made monumental and overbearing. At least some of this dissimulation, this conflicted force, carries into the quality of the lure, a darkly comedic impelling: come, closer and closer, to the farce of permanent memorial.

After so many years pull still has an intoxicating charm, the delicate allure of time accreted. Re-visitation thus carried by an impulsion to see again: re-creative, re-appropriative, a challenging return.

In lure the chaotic passage of time itself looms, a passage stood out against the absolute impassing of the monolith. A wait. An endurance. A gentle accost and reproach, as if waiting for the very moment that would permit the whole thing to finally fully explode. A climax of disappearance and disavowal. What's waited for perhaps no longer monumentation but the permission for dissolution. Obelisk standing in this way as a brute reminder of an exigency unfulfilled. An acknowledgement of the cut-short project of intoxicating, entrancing lure all those years ago.

Air's elusive charge a now diminished force. Body of figure still extended, disposed outside at a limit. Still a reach towards, captivated and desirous of contact. Force of charged space inverted, potency shifts. Body draws more emphatically, with more compulsion into the space drawn out between stone façade and reaching hand held out in front. Entrance weaker, but body still pulled forth, distended into tip of reaching finger, leaving a torpid mass following in its wake. Body forces situation, a wilful dispossession, a reach driven from within rather than accosted from beyond.

Diffuse clamour of obelisk pull lacks concentrated force. Overpowering entrance spreads, but spectral distribution pulls with a weaker, broader invocation.

Weak entrance.

Collision.

Overlap.

Other worlds of entrance begin to disrupt, knot through the once intense bilateral concordance of just obelisk and body. Into the once tightly-focused charged space a whole array of worlds flood. Rapid proliferation disrupts confident propriety, no longer just an overlap of two gestures, no longer the assured measure of a thirty-year span. Even after the transitional point beyond which memory was no longer capable of bearing witness, even after the denial of testimony that made of the body

entranced another body and another world, even then the transition came about within the simple relation of the charged between. Now, overlapping, other interventions jostle and diffuse the intensity of the singular relation into a scattered series of distracting correspondences. Relational draw disrupted by out of alignment embossments. Obelisk delineated twice, then more. A strange overlap distorting the simple correspondence of body and stone edifice.

Proliferating overlaps cause half-remembrance to explode. Reverie cascades as multiple scenes. All tied up and drawn through the two parallel motions of figure's lure split across time. No longer clarity of possession, of memory, testament, witness or event. A great span of possible heritage scattered through the no-longer-lived past of the figure. An inversion and contagion of the simplicity of a memory, a provoked recall now set at by shards from elsewhere coercing and disrupting.

Embossments cause distension of body to become diffuse. Without clear origination, without clarity of obelisk reached for, or the simple overlap of a remembrance, body tips this way then that. A hesitant, nervous disposal.

Memory must return to the fray. Back in without the clarity of parallels or repetitions. A great throng of witnessing without guarantee. The unreliability of the narrator complicit in all. A scattered introspection. Careful, picking through, grasping for assurance where no guarantees can be offered.

Visions clash: other stepped paths, other approaches, images, captures and distensions. A crumpled gap filling with strange concordances and the absolutely out-of-place. A transplanted scenography of times past, overlapped and crashed together to produce a conflicted heritage of the space between body and obelisk.

Embossments protrude. A provocation of foamed over heritage. Incertitude looms, conviction of stone lost amidst conflicting outlines. Another trajectory cuts

across. The parallel passage of another figure, inverted, but drawn all the same into obelisk. The influence of the same elusive force entrancing body.

Caught up in overlapped emboss, tangle of the inverted lure of figure scatters through entrance, distorting past of approach into a split vision without clear provenance. As if progress stepped twice: two angles, two approaches. Captivation carries multiple viewpoints. Steps conjoin past wander in a split patterning that jumps across perspectives.

Compound of approach knotted into histories striped across, all caught in pull and entrance of obelisk, as if lure opens a passage through which overflows the monument's memorialisations. A whole repository of past entrances, collected then sent cascading back into the world.

Emboss overlays one side then another, leaving a composite image of illegible form. In lure obelisk takes on exploded, diagrammatic unfolding: all sides visible. Through the occasional concordance of step's crossed path remembrances spread. Semblances of strange scenes punctuate staccato correspondence of steps. A transit of other worlds: a raised gun, a line, an imploration, resignation, clamour, a halt indefinite, a familiar forest become strange, a wander and a reverie, a return and a troubling similitude, expectations allayed through the placid stays-the-same.

Images scatter. A perfume of another world, another life, inflecting entrance and spilling into step's progress.

Lure conflicts histories. A whole well of memory corrupted through continuous overspill. A testimony always supplemented with other passages. Dispossession comes with lure, a drawing out of body that divests testimony and witness of ground. In a reciprocal motion a great flood of correspondent histories flow back. A mass of material affiliating, incising with hesitancy and forgetfulness. A

whole host of impropriety swollen into a single position of testimony. Clash forces remembrance and witnessing wide open, rendering the whole process alien and contestable. Overlap of entrance rubs out a single historical trajectory and the simple pattern of similar remembrance, leaving instead a corrupted collation of incompatible materials. Other worlds, other pasts caught up in the lure of obelisk and distributed randomly through the entrance that draws in.

Thirty-year gap, liberty for corrupted opening. A time replete with its own internal hesitations. Unsure retracings compounding overspill of testimony. Return pulls in great swells of time; testimony mixes, concocting an intense and fragmentary reserve. Parts recomposed into shattered edifice, merely a poor illusion of the completion of a past existence.

Full entrance grips despite weak allure. A strange hold returns to scene of overlapped strikes. Another resonance scatters time through already confounded scene of remembrance. All knotted up, strikes now combine with obelisk lure and the firing squad's meticulously co-ordinated raise of rifles: at the same time barrels point, terrible indecision looms.

Sacrificial scene returns with the brevity of a well-worn story. Gathering, blade strike, night spill, arising, recomposition, celestial ascent. The familiar retrenched. Throughout return, weak correspondences fill scene of sacrifice with extraneous details: strange import given to nuance.

### *A gathering*

Group gather around supine body. Witnessing faces shift, strange transmutations of characteristics: a mobile composite, secretive and varied across time and testimony. Ongoing, shifts continue until blade plunged hilt-deep and night swallows all.

Visages lost. Witnesses and witnessing become impossible. Group disabused of power in spilt night.

Face to face occluded. Grasp convulsed and visages disperse into opaque veil. Frantic eyes search, looking swallowed in thick darkness. Blank vision streaked and glossed by tears streaming. Night patterned by veils of liquid flow drawn out on corneal surface.

Conflictual meeting of eye to eye superseded in spilt night, overtaken by the eye meeting nothing other than the heterogeneity of the dark improper spilt from sacrificial blow.

After the conflict of the other, the absolutely inassimilable, comes the other pulled close. An intimacy of love.

Intimate entrance, one to another. Locked embrace of lovers, the intense relation of one to another at the cost of all others. Intractable, enigmatic allure. Effulgent passion of the heart. Given over to the fully incommensurable relation in a commitment with a single intense focus. The indulgence of a single incommensurable. All else dropped for the proximity of a deeply committed engagement to probe its extent. Its parameters of resistance plunged into time and again through bodies entwined, gazes entranced, words whispered in intimate address. Abandoned one to another. Oblivion of the world disposes lovers outside. In exposure outside one to another collapses, dispersing because no longer of a world: exposure to an infinite abyss.

All configurations of lovers carry implicit challenge to the unsurpassable, incommunicable reserve that resists at the heart of the existence of another. A challenge to the law of the other, a challenge to the each time incommensurable injunction of the world.

The heart itself, symbolic exchange of the most proper, picked out the warm, pulsating interior and gifted. Unpassable part, symbol's intimate convocation with life, with death, knotted into the entrance. The heart, elixir of love and its destructive proximity to death, to dissolution. Lovers possess the fusional promise of a symbolic exchange, but even in this symbolic procedure, fusion is never complete. Always a final evasion, a twisting, contorting figure that slips at the last. The heart's exchange thickly complicit with death; the excision, the gift, an abandonment of life to another carries across with it the penalty of dissolution, dying externalised from its intimate recess and set free. Love always a reserve, an excess, an unreachable part evading grasp.

Lovers find their mutually entranced introspection snagged on the limit of fusion. The intimate consummation of two striking the still intractable limit of a singular existence. Just the one, unassimilable. A difference each time, however minimal. An intimate reserve held back, more intimate even than the whispered confessions of two knotted in heady complicity.

Lovers' proximity marks out a sharing and at the same time a limit of consummation. The unsurpassed edge of finitude, a measure of the infinite and commanding reserve of the other.

Intimate proximity of lovers finds a parallel and expanded form in the ecstatic response provoked by spilt night. The trembling enclosure of night forces intense proximity. Bodies knotted find touching exposure of one to another multiplied and cast across taut expanses, creases and folds of sensory body. All touchings sites of reciprocal intimacies. Small patches of correspondence shared in the thick of night. Touch effracts, exposes to outside and positions each body in a singular relation. Multiple, singular engagements creating a great expanse of provocations, reciprocities,



impartations: a sensory engagement constituting whole body. Clamour of contacts heady and intoxicating as bodies cavort in night. Touchings, ingresses, like never before. An intimate caress multiplied and intensified.

The climactic moments of ecstatic contortion carry only the tangential approach of an unsurpassable limit. Elsewhere always regresses from touch, a strange reserve unreachable. Up against touchings do not give way to fusional fulfilment.

A teasing, deliquescent embrace.

Fraternity, the heart or law of a community exposing most forcefully the solitude of each. Already a conflict of separation of each and the passing of obligation that would hold all together in common. Fraternity, a motif of the heart or the law of the community itself.

Fraternity, a clash of two insistent parts: the passionate heart of the lovers, the law of the ethical obligation. A delicate compound of clashing in suspension. Heart or law guards decision with the simple gesture of equivocation, a thinking together of clashed forms.

Heart or law traversed by two tensions simultaneously restricting and overflowing one another. The heart as lawless passion finds a conflicting regulation in the incommensurable other of ethical obligation. The law as regulating obligation finds the imperative of justice (the face of the other) modulated by a passionate abandon overflowing the whole edifice of the just. A measure of justice for the oblivion of lovers.

The heart or the law, suspension in equivocation, finds second correspondence between the tension of two politics: the determinate politics of equality before the law, the revolutionary abandonment of a politics that exceeds. The heart or the law thus measures out a delicate tension between excess of passion and obligation, but also a

tension between the abandonment of revolution and prostration before the limitless power of the law.

Equivocation of heart or law harbours the dark shadow of a radical heightening. Passionate abandon and monstrous justice would find a commonality of their most heightened tension in an unfettered paroxysm of justice: the splenetic intolerance of fascism. The equivocation of heart or law here would collapse into a common determination in the form of a single figure: the recourse of delicate suspension to a collapsed simple.

The heart itself however, already split prior to equivocation. Overbidding passion holds in itself an intimation of the political through lawless abandon, not only lovers as the overflowing excess of the ethical obligation of the other, but buried right in the heart of the heart, the possibility of the overbidding passion that becomes paroxysm without the adjunct of law heightening. Once again a fascism, but a fascism no longer borne from the accord of justice and passionate excess. A stain of the heart itself unbound from all law. A dark spot becoming visible.

Carrying the oblivion of the world, or all else, into an enlarged register, the unfettered passion of the heart can transform without the modulating force of lovers. Heart overflowing all. Oblivion becomes frenetic whilst seeking legitimation in another ground. Such unchecked passion, the impulse of fascism, commands a figure, commands a mythic grounding.

The heart or the law as equivocation in the political register is washed over too with the impulsive caprice of the heart, finding even the measure of a passion lodged in the heart of the law. Determinate politics thus offers a foreboding of the unchecked passions by exposing the possibility of a mythic figure for founding a determinate

sense of politics. The possibility of a founding decision, a figure of determinate law for an overbidding paroxysm.

Bodies press, flesh meets. The heterogeneous excess reaches a terminal point in bodies trembling together, one into another. Intimacy, a crumpled space of heterogeneous limit crashed against. Dark spills as lovers' intensity. Terrible confrontation imparts the desperate tremble of sadness, hearts broken and tears streaming. Night comes, overwhelms. Bodies inverted, contorted and clashed in a paroxysmic heightening of the heterogeneous.

Involutions and ingresses of the other patterned on the same scatter through the sacrificial scene. Familiar repetition comes with incommensurable reserve, just the smallest resistance to the same each time: no absorption. A confrontation of the other is pulled to a maximum tension in sacrifice, then foams over as spilt night and dissolves in the carefree convolution of ecstatic bodies. Confrontation tensed, then resolved in the indifferent contortion of bodies. Outside no longer the painful entrance, the incommensurability of locked gaze, rather all dispatched into the dulled touch of bodies. Reciprocal nervous apprehension anesthetised by heavy sprawl of darkness. At the extreme outside the other departs from the intractable tension of irreconcilable difference, a difference given common form in the tortured gaze. Instead the touch of two or more in the thick of night sends reverberations of a common space right through the mutually engaged: night merely intensification, not the count of one plus one, but the count of just one, each time singular, each time entranced in the common space of impartation. Thus the logic of the other does not find its most extreme and difficult manifestation in spilt night and the chop of the head yet to come, but rather its own rebuke.

A delicate suspension of the two, each exposed to the other. Each forcefully exposing the solitude of the other. Overbidding passion meets ethical obligation in a compound form: the equivocation of the heart or the law. One and the other suspended, together, at the point of dissolution.

Reverie falters.

A thirty-year span.

So much a different figure. Although the same body, now more worn, the question asked of the necessity of a different name. A distance of enough years to change mode of address. The historical figure and the apposite quality of the third person: all those years ago, the name “Nancy.”

Figure approached obelisk in company of friends, those distinct and those the same. Company split by historical distance, with frayed memories displaced or recalled. Distinctions became blurred as entrance deepened grasp. Residual memorialisations, those appropriations of obelisk bearing witness through distinct times and worlds, overlapped and reconfigured into fragments collated by lure of obelisk. A punctual insertion of alien parts distributed without coherent rationale, just a maelstrom of material that came forth then receded, picked up resonances or disappeared without a trace.

Ecstatic contortions ruin testimony, dispel witness to another place, another time. All testimonial lost in the contorted entrance of a body exorbitant. Such a slip an extreme form of dispossession of the capacity to witness, to recall, to testify. The great occlusion of night dispels witness for partial and uncorroboratable testimony: mere stories, nothing more.

Revisiting the site of dispossessive entrance thirty years prior carries the residual quality of a long-forgotten routine now repeated. The similitude of steps conjoining. The strange allure of obelisk, implacable and coaxing. Weaker force of entrance dulls lure; the exorbitant relation anticipated, slow in showing its full force.

Historical distance carries same persistent quality of ecstatic contortion. Even with parameters of repeated gestures, steps and events, allure spans a gap that disrupts and provides just enough space for the briefest hesitancy to enter and ruin recall. A minimal form of testimonial incertitude, just enough to command a different register, to command a third-personal switch that disrupts presumed continuity: “Nancy,” a name resounding, background noise to obelisk entrance. An embodied acknowledgement of the improper, impartation and the weary procedure of grasping-itself. A process played out to exhaustion over thirty years to the point of a sense of the impropriety of existence, a living out of time.

Such a passage traces the real-time complexity of thought shaped by the proximity of personal address. The figure now accompanied by friends no longer capable of accompaniment except through obelisk. Stood, implacable and waiting through passing of friends. Repository of shared memory locked tight in stone perimeter approximates friends’ replies, repays the return with appropriated fragments, bit parts composed into a shattered testimony without correspondent body.

Obelisk stands and unworks even in the no-longer presence of those memorialised. A continual process of recomposition, the collation and dispersal of fragmented testimony through the disruption of unworking: a memorialisation never complete.

Obelisk grips tighter.

In thick of night bodies convolute, unfolding into and through one another. Ecstasy opens, bodies tip into space outside. Limits crossed as bodies mesh in darkness. A nervous composite. Such spilling, a communicative exigency. A sharing, from one to another in a space mutually imparted. An exposition. Each traversing outside: a meeting of sense.

Communicative passage of night exposes bodies one to another. An exposition, an abandonment. In ecstasy, body given to night, relinquished to heterogeneous clashing. Such disposition and dispersal gives body to a structure unassimilable, the inversion and pressured relent to an outside without accord. The resistance of an excess, the excrescent.

Night clears. Contortion relents. Bodies disentangle, limbs loosen from limbs, pressed-tight flesh unsticks. As heavy shadows recede, body appears from veil. Supine across stump. Wound in chest, thick and deep. Head missing, dispatched in confusion of night.

Hastily reassembled into loose circle, group recover. Short sharp breaths slow and elongate. Tremors lose vibrancy. Surrounding the supine, headless corpse, group collect themselves and wait. Numbering one less, participant disappeared in spilt night. In place just the once-wielded blade abandoned on forest floor.

Time passes.

### *Arisen*

Twitch of corpse hits group like a bullet, jarring the world, forcing wide open. Incertitude of death given stark and apparent form as a small and intense gesture crushes the surety of its passing. Death interrupted. Incompleted, as if sent back from another world.

Body arises incomprehensible. Death stopped, then undone. Caught out in strange event of sacrifice, in the overlap of strikes. Body, work of time, life accretion, witness formation, propering of testimony all pulled in. Drawn-out work of possession and collection catastrophically undone in swift strike of blade. An unworking incision that spills life into the world, another new proliferation. Unworking of blade addresses body anew: a corpse, accretions of death matter, a release. Chaos of unworking runs deep, imparted by the blade right into the very heart. A shock. Everything stops. Interrupted, unworking.

Infinite progress of dying refutes death, the always-incompletion of a life. The sacrificial event must avoid the trap of a completed death enacted, set to work. The whole scene of sacrifice plays out on the edge of this tension between unworking maintained in its liberty, and a collapse into the parodic form of a death-work enacted for unworking. Parody thus stands as an ever-present threat.

Strike kills, dark night floods. Throughout dying refutes work for interminable unworking, but the logic of work imposes itself forcefully into the scene: a death put to work for a sacrificial offering.

Twitch of corpse refutes. Death corrupted allays parodic work by forcing dying into its proper a-logic: unworking. Arisen Acéphale, standing refutation of parody.

Evasive heart of community, a double negation caught by indecision. Neither- nor of community suspended between resisted fusion and allayed dissipation. The consummative strike forces indecision right into the heart of the sacrifice, a decisive blow that betrays its own surety of gesture. At the heart of it all, the community and the strike, an unbound heart, struck.

Evasive heart must take place from a work. Unworking, always from within the context of a work. The motion of work's continual opening onto sense.

Unavowable heart of community, unworked through the double negation of neither-nor must take place from a work. Such a taking place cannot be from death as work, the structure is an impossibility. Death is only ever capable of being a corrupted, half-formed work that dispossesses itself continually.

Out of corrupted death, sacrifice begets Acéphale. Conflictual, unfinished quality of sacrifice is carried through. Arising, Acéphale stands as bastardised formation, a slippage of work and unworking in its perpetual conflict. The recomposition and later areal quality of Acéphale plays out the strange compound form of a process lost somewhere between a corrupted death-work, its impossibility, and the arising from out of this confusion. Acéphale thus embodies an abortive gesture of instantiation, the communal brought to bear through the sacrificial act developed into its most coherent form.

Stuttered arising of Acéphale, death corrupted. In the suspended instant of first corpse twitch, death lost. Somewhere between emphatic puncture and terrible arising, interminable dying disjoins, becomes misdirected. Death, then arising, but not a reversal of process from death back to the life that once preceded. Rather Acéphale arises with the stains and wounds of death, its own perverted stigmata. Acéphale arisen: corrupted death.

Corruption, not production. Begetting of Acéphale refutes work, just as death, in its interminable strangeness refuses to be made a work of. Not work, not unworked, death then arising appears as a corruption of process that is neither but appears as if structured by the logic of both.

Corruption confounds like a runaway unworking, a continual unbinding of the strange incertitude of death. Finding an exorbitant form in arising, the strangeness of



death finds one more apposite possibility in the corruption that renders its incertitude with startling clarity.

Night spill from wound, between strike and arising, is impossible overspilt. Runaway unbinding, like unworking set free, carries into spilt night. The impossible, as appearance of freedom for continual unbinding, is distended from the instantaneity of the beat of time into the dark span of night that wrenches open the instant, drawing it out to an almost unbearable tension.

Spilling comes as suspension, a suspension in the face of corrupted death. The always disappointing instant finds clear revocation in the re-appearing instant of Acéphale arising. Such apparency contaminates the simple form of the instant's disappearance through an exposure to an excess of disappearance, the apparency of the disappeared whether in stark terms of arising, or from a vacated gap testifying to disappearance through the remainder. Spilt night swallowing occludes vision, clogs ears, chokes mouth; sensory deprivation by the heterogeneous clouds and obfuscates but does not disappear or draw out a lament for the no longer. In night proximity finds new measure, ecstatic convulsions pull and clash, something distinctly other than disappearance finds a temporary space and a novel permissiveness.

Distended instant of time, a free space of unbinding. Heterogeneous spill refutes regulation for proliferating difference. A night of the great improper.

Distended beat of time finds form in the fugue structure of the suspension of coincidence and distance. The dark spill that distends time opens as if a single beat of infinite length was drawn out, thus an intensification of the fugue count comes out of the killing strike. A moment of intimate conclave in which the suspended coincidence and dispersal finds its brightest clashing. There where the dark obfuscates the gaze, there where passion outbids all bodies, there where a strange intimation of a

prohibition against radical dissolution into the chaos of nothing, an absolute nihilism, is held in abatement. The fugue time of dark spill is the crystal clear exposition of the delicate gathering of community.

Then Acéphale stands, head removed, gaze denuded, passions abate as abandonment finds a corrupted, unworking form.

Concordance of disparate parts in spilt night: the time of suspended instant. A chaotic fugue-time, coincidence, dissonance and concordance spanned across suspension that further corrupts the engagement of each with all. A mis-directional resonance, sometimes catching, sometimes not.

After arising, Acéphale unworked to the extreme. The process of unworking made visible in the stark and radical changes pursued. No more constrictions of possible-body, unworked body after arising carries through resonance of strange incertitude of death and the chaotic corruption of dying. Vertiginous forms of body lose necessity; in arising body seeks forms anew, searching for congruence with the heterogeneous origination of body arisen.

Hedonistic indulgence of restructuring. Head off, replaced on groin. Heart out. Intestines exposed. All change for future world, all change for celestial ascent. Non-functional recompositions determined just after thick of night. Impulsive shifts of form inspired by the chaotic heterogeneous spilt from wound.

Acéphale stood tall, burning heart held aloft. A site of critical contest exposed under the now-clear heavens. The beating heart of love, effulgent passion overflowing. The heart or the law, simple equivocation.

Held aloft, an exposure of the law of the heart: friendship, the unleashed passion of abandonment. Intensified, rarefied in the commitment of the sacrificial relation (the lovers perverted). Law of the heart, passionate overspilling, exhibited in

its flaming glory. Out of the chest into the clear night, emblem of corrupted death, impulsive life-force transmuted into ceaseless burning. The law of the heart casts light across the clearing. Held aloft, the heart brings forth a refrain: unleashed to the world the law of heart, the abandoned passions of ecstasy.

Heart held aloft, the beating solitude of a life excised and exposed. The raising up of the heart in the clenched-tight fist of arisen Acéphale exposes solitude with nobility. Such exposure, radically improper. Through the desecration of a life, the extreme gift of abandonment and the corruption of death, the law of the heart find its exposure to a world. Only after the heterogeneous spilling, ecstatic convulsion, bodily recomposition, does the law of the heart work its way into the world. A composite of exigencies builds an exposition, an exposition that is nothing more than the striving of communication to offer the incommunicable: the sharing of abandonment, the exposure of solitude, that radical propriety.

In a single gesture of offering, the heart is exposed under empty heavens with a simple impulse: no longer expiatory but rather expository, behold the solitude of the heart, here in this clearing. Accompanied by the simple concordance of a plaintive chorus in response: “we nonetheless share.”

The heart or the law: equivocation offers an entreaty. The modulating implorations of the law, thus a passionate abandon held before the precipice of oblivion. The law of the heart burns bright, but the dramatic chiaroscuro of the clearing harbours the law’s lingering obligation: the law of the heart.

Exposed heart measures out second equivalence in its elevation under clear night. A twin political exigency that subtends the reverie, its background patterning. The heart, abandonment to revolution; the law, tendency of fulfilment.

In heart excised and held aloft this second conflict rages, political stakes knotted through the emblematic equivalence of the heart or the law. The raised heart thus finds multiple registers of a repeat tension: separation and fusion.

Cutting across multiple conflicts of political exigency, flaming heart held aloft combines such tensions into a single emblem of the problematic. A knotting of political fulfilment and revolutionary abandon, the democratic-beyond and the aristocratic-heterogeneous, determinate politics and its indeterminate sense. Such conflicts play out a tension across time, the life of an apparitional figure apprehending oblivion. A span of years split right down the middle by an orchestrated raising of guns, an intolerable straight line of decisive incertitude.

Acéphale arises abandoned. Out of corruption then abandoned to interminable fate of arising. Begotten, a double impartation: gift of death, gift of arising. Given over to world distinct, begetting plots arising with predetermined trajectory: always up to the heavens.

Acéphale abandoned, as if literal embodiment of the suspended instant. Spilt night taken as formal injunction, a clarification of status: abandoned, lost to a world distant from corruption of death. Abandoned Acéphale carries the same treasure of the limitless impossible, the unbinding liberty of suspended instant.

Blade strike, gift of abandonment. Inevitable pact of the lovers' relation. Transfixed abandon of obligation, the pattern of the intense, infinite investment of one in another finds final form in strike of mutual abandon: an imposition and a relinquishment.

Acéphale arises imperious.

Group astonished. Craven stupefaction in face of terrible arising. Death corrupted, caught out in act of begetting.

Silence passes, an indefinite waiting.

“Behold Acéphale!”

A chorus asserts. Arising met with enunciation. Approach acknowledged, existence legitimated in naming: here is Acéphale.

The clarity and affirmation of a name for the begotten. Another possible name: the unavowable. Name sticks through simple binary of decision: named, nameless. “Behold Acéphale!” names, but does not always avow. A carriage of force, avowal confers separately.

“Behold Acéphale!”

A name resounds. The speculative proposition of witness. A testimony to witnessing and the visibility of perverted arising that confounds and calls into question testimony. Thus the need for an emphatic stating, putting into words the clear enunciation of a witness in the present indicative: “Behold!” Words not for the sceptic but for the committed. A commensuration of vision. A command to open the eyes and see despite the sting of tears, despite the fallibility of eyes red-raw and streaked glassy.

“Behold Acéphale!”

A name and the force of an avowal. Admittance to sight, acknowledgement of testimony. Beholden Acéphale avowed with force of testimony. Opened into world through witness, from the slipping veil of spilt night.

“Behold Acéphale!”

Naming, avowal. Intimate relation, proximity within testimony. Brought together in the compound form “Behold Acéphale!” But compound structure belies an intimacy that is not always in action. Naming does not always bring an avowal, just as an avowal does not always bring a name. The avowed unavowable, a force designating

only a non-specific resistance, but a resistance that comes with the specific force of the outside part: closed, unadmitted, heterogeneous, excessive. A resistance against the injunctions of project, the demands of work as a saturating force.

“Behold Acéphale!”

Avowal force-structure operates transitively. Thus in each specific instance the avowed and the unavowable must be co-ordinated to determine effectivity. The avowed does not always oppose the unavowable. Avowal is a force of bringing to attention, the unavowed is the resistant. Even brought to attention through avowal the unavowable resists. Yet the unavowable has to at the very least be avowable, or else it would be nothing.

“Behold Acéphale!”

Avowal is a force that has quantity and direction, thus the designations of avowal and unavowable can clash or offer partial admittances dependent upon the specific instances of their occurrence. A head-on collision, a perpendicular trajectory or parallel attraction can play through vectoral quality of avowal and unavowal. Quantity of force changes speed and intensity, a network of cross-cuts and directional shifts establishes a matrix of differentiation: one and the other find highly particularised incidences of relation or counteraction.

“Behold Acéphale!”

Avowal-unavowable structure marks the problem of testimony arising from spilt night and the secretive event of sacrifice recounted. Admittance each time comes with a context dependency. Thus the avowal of Acéphale is carried in the clarity of the force of vision, “Behold Acéphale!”, but such an avowal is keyed to a single sense of testimony and the privilege of seeing in a specific moment.

“Behold Acéphale!”

Avowal cannot carry through the full oppositional force required to mobilise and articulate the unavowable. Rather an each time specific instance of avowal can engage a small component of the resistant unavowable. A sight, a fragrance, a touch, a thought and so on. Speculative and singular instantiations pull parts into the more general edifice of the avowal of the unavowable, providing particular facets with highlights, points of view, or positions opening onto the acknowledged but ultimately reserved and ungraspable force of the unavowable.

“Behold Acéphale!”

Right at the heart of group, amidst ecstatic contortions and knotted bodies, is the force of an avowal asserting the each time singular existence of a body, the each time singular existence of just an existence: its brute fact.

Partial clarifications, activations, engagements, testimonies, all grapple with the ambiguity of the double negation, the neither-nor of the unavowable heart of community. Neither fusion nor absolute separation. Heart or law. Right at the very site of the most proper is an unavowable force, glimpsed only in the improper incising into the unavowed and releasing its particular resistance. Such incisions are the cutting clarity of avowal, the force of an assertion linked to testimonial position: “Behold Acéphale!”

The unavowable necessitates a complex disavowal of presupposition that would be brought to bear on the delicate suspension found in the invocation of the heart or the law. Disavowal consists of a withdrawal, a meticulous inassent that resists by a refusal of participation rather than an outright rebellion or participative reaction. Disavowal thus has a passive, enclosive quality.

Thrown right into the heart of community is the problem of decision, the proper/improper right at that opens onto the question of deciding for existence.

Occasion suspended on the limit, suspended at the unavowable. Thus the heart of community neither bound nor unbound, neither fusion nor absolute separation. Between two polarities of the double negative the partial clarity of avowal offers fragments that merely indicate specific instantiations of something that withdraws from simple testimony. Spilt night occludes, ecstatic participation empties and displaces simple subject witnessing. In night testimonial structure slips, leaving the same dead heart of the unfamiliar and alien elsewhere. The experience of the radically improper in a difficult and tenacious proximity.

Caught between the partial correspondences of avowal and the unavowable, decision must be taken. The composition of always partial avowal into an approximating but inadequate structure, or the obtuse resistance of the unavowable. To this a third, a structure predicated not on resistance nor the synthetic correlation of the two negations, but rather the sublation that is the disavowed. An each time specific withdrawal of consent. Singular, transitive, disavowal works in inverse motion through active propositions of avowal. Not through a direct opposition that would simply close the eyes that behold nor silence the mouth that speaks, but rather in each instance removes the consent of testimony, opening to question the testimonial function of each and every avowal. Thus force of avowal can offer the testimony of “Behold Acéphale!” but without the consent of the unavowable heart of such an existence. Disavowal runs with a kind of syncopated rhythm to avowal, taking away each time the permission to acknowledge; or those disavowed simply do not take up the invitation offered. Thus the unavowable can be simultaneously the disavowed. A great force of the strange that cedes only minor spaces to the opening offered. A deep and introverted force.



Imperious embodiment arises monumental, all the while undermined by the convulsions of unworking impulses. Bodily composition questioned, undermined, fatally flawed.

First Acéphale clammers from decomposition of forest floor, the teeming life of humus. Standing from the expectant decomposition of the corpse, a process already begun at the heart of life and its intimate communion with dying, its tight, pressing proximity. Transitional state carries through qualities into arisen Acéphale, the base matter of decomposed material providing an additional impetus for recomposing compulsion. A link maintained to the organic matter scattered and abandoned to its own work.

Two figures of Acéphale split, an apparitional diversion. From perfect similitude, a slip out of step and out of time causes outlines to separate into two identical resemblances. Reverie slips as recall crosses. Two distinct but identically constituted figures depart from what appears now to be a compound form in the centre of the scene. The same headless body, the same flaming heart gripped, intestines exposed, groin-skull stare. Yet divergences carry through into a partitioned scene, the initial separation of two figures leading into two worlds that play out in a confused overlap. Faulted recall, obelisk and sediment of memorial confound. Split-reverie troubling, illuminating the suddenly obvious synthetic nature of the recall.

Lure weakens, falters.

The entrance draws attention to its sleight of hand by going too far in its ambitions for recall. The overlap of two worlds breaks intensity of single focus that lure channels with its impulse of attraction. Split causes falter, leaving entranced figure with other scenes impinging, the public square and its whole scattered history of connections. Other reveries tumble through, a great kaleidoscope of dispossessed

events no longer witnessed. Tranches of the forgotten and abandoned impose, both mundane and profound.

Figure split carries Acéphale off two times. Ascent into celestial carrying constitutional differences that inflect the motion, the whole history of the event revealed.

First split in arising magisterial, arms wide and back straight. Address ringing through forest clearing “Behold Acéphale!” Outlines falter, diverge. Blurred godhead stands awaiting. Trembling still from exertion of arising Acéphale carries a doubled-up vibrato, a strange afterimage of the tremulous body stood still. As exertion abates, tremble softens and afterimage becomes blurred figure once more.

### *Celestial*

Up, up into heavens Acéphale goes. Ever skyward ascent from earth to mythic skies. Heavens rent, then swallowed whole. Acéphale ascends, then disappears into heavenly abyss. Soon return the placid night skies, littered with celestial bodies: calm vision of furious energy.

Acéphale ascends, graceful and terrifying. A far distance from the wretched clamber up from supine lying to trembling stance. Ascent streaks skies with starlight trail, ephemeral sketch of Acéphale trajectory, a venture of the chthonic in the airless embrace of the celestial. Alien imposition.

Celestial ascent of Acéphale mimics the chthonic arising of the corpse from the mundanity of forest floor and tree stump. Acéphale arises from corrupting, imparting force of blade. Up from forest floor without clarity of logic or efficacy of impartation, a begetting without clear origination.

Arising to celestial sphere comes from inversion of imparting gesture. The celestial strike rained down in indefinite time past carries a debt, a burden for repayment that is memorialised in the fallen tree and the persistence of tree stump occupying its own distinct time of decomposition. Acéphale ascending, a retort from the terrestrial. A more complete offering to the heavens, an appeasement and a provocation, offered with the decision of self-determination. A choice of ascent, an adventure into the heavenly, into the mythic, with the agency and agitation of interminable unworking.

In ascent Acéphale exposes the myth of the absence of myth, showing through incessant recomposition the structural mutations of myth and its persistence. In a way the mythic figure as fascism's recourse turned against itself, betrayed by a configuration impossible to stabilise, impossible to pin down as coherent form. Acéphale thus comes as implicit challenge for both left and right: a challenge to ethical obligation through the face-to-face denuded and the overflowing of passionate embrace, a challenge to myth-figuration by an exposure of its operationalised use of the figural as a recursive structure.

### *Myth worlds*

Acéphale stops, sits atop mountain. Blade dropped. Heart proffered in front of chest. Passion of abandonment held. An affirmation of the avowal of myth through passionate overflow of heart. A knotted convocation of revolutionary excess and the passionate intensity of love's oblivion.

Fugue as scansion and duration no longer finds simple presence in the beat of the heart, rather the non-metrical flicker of flame attests to a fugue corrupted by the killing strike and excision. Corrupted, but not an irrelevancy, rather an art of the fugue

addressed to a complex, compound time. The kind of time experienced in the conflict of the dark spill, interior time clashing with world-historical. But this complexity comes with the burning heart of a passion that outbids the dissymmetrical obligation of the other, a passion that in doing so opens the clashing into a different register. Traversed by a structure of the law, such a clashed time is outdone by the passion of the heart, a clash of times with overtones of abandonment and oblivion of the world. Such an overcoming of the geometry of law finds its most conducive form in arising to mythic realms: worlds of passionate temporalities, worlds of conflicts and their suspension, worlds run through with the choral imploration of the fugue.

Blade dispatched to the ground. "*Le glaive, c'est la passerelle*" echoes around the valleys with origin unclear. A bridge between worlds. Blade strikes, kills: implement of begetting. Heart excised through hole in chest. Blade provides transitory passage, from enclave of body to outside world. In more than one way a bridge of worlds. A bridge of equivocation too: killing strike, the heart or the law. Passionate violation checked by obligations of ritual: not quite the frenzy of amok.

Up, tall and monumental, Acéphale elevated to one leg. Foreboding figure towering over distant horizon.

Up, Acéphale goes in flight, ascent led by return of equivocation: the heart or the law. Streaked through mythic heavens is the suspension borne on high by the capricious agent Acéphale. A consummation of the delicate third, the neither-nor that maintains both in an intimate proximity. Ferocity of march of Acéphale testimony to the extreme tension and repulsion of conflict held in suspension.

Arisen, up from ground of chthonic force to heavens. In a schema of myth, from earth, to underworld, to mythic skies. Three stages: terrestrial, chthonic, celestial. But in such a transit arisen Acéphale carries through the force of each, a trembling

partition of each to all. Acéphale thus each and all together, never only one. Blade strikes into terrestrial, sacrificial offering dies, sinking into catatonic embrace of chthonic, when darkness clears Acéphale arises, up and stood tall from deep recesses of death. From terrestrial to chthonic Acéphale carries through the sacrificial abandonment, the quality of a gift imparted to the chthonic. Ascending to the heavens Acéphale draws the chthonic back into the celestial briefly, the imperative of recomposition comes with the corruption of deathly embrace that still grips Acéphale. Up from terrestrial and chthonic conflation Acéphale ascends to celestial sphere, drawing through the complex interplay into a final realm. A transit of three, neither only one nor the other. Once more a delicate suspension, the coincidence and distance of a fugue time across a span of worlds.

Acéphale strides across raging seas. Marching implacable, relentless. Still heart burns with an non-metrical beat; still blade accompanies. A sheer indifference to terror of the world, stark refusal of oblivion. Heart as if mitigated in its lead of passionate abandon. Anchored by the law of the blade, incandescent light of burning heart leads the way through dark skies.

Acéphale stops, drops to one knee. A strike of blade into chest once more. Dark spills, another foment of the oblivion of all in passion of abandon. Chaotic orgy obfuscates world with its clamorous embraces, its deafening screams and rending laughter.

A delicate suspension of triple terms, the coincident distance of heart and law falters as spill swamps. Release of intense passion, an overbidding of ecstatic oblivion takes hold. Heart asserts its lawless passion, returning to a ritual of begetting long distant. Law succumbs to assertion of Dionysos, an archetypal force dissipating the

restrictive economy of the law. Instead fulsome abandon of passion enforces, the intoxicating presence of a grape vine sprouts from out of dark-graced ground.

An overspill of revolutionary abandon as Acéphale rages from out of dark occlusion. A new head! A pressing stare from enraged eyes, deep-set madness, bullheaded!

Revolutionary abandon comes with spill, ecstasy spreads contorting mythic bodies. A lawless passion set free. Terrible violence of law abating, blade loses emblematic impulse, abstraction and equality instead becoming subject to the vagaries of the heart. Impulsive, capricious, a violent bestowal of nothing other than the pure heterogeneous slipping into the form of a sovereign impulse. Delicate suspension ruptures with the assertion of Dionysos, tipping over to one of the terms. Acéphale traversed by continuous unworking suddenly stopped, captured as a single work: corrupted, thus decayed, pulled out of the continuous traversal of an unworking. Lawless passion overbids to oblivion, left over the corpse of a once unworking, not a consolidation into work, but the doomed imperative of the lifeless: incapable of all.

Frenzy continues. Such fury another head appears. Acéphale now bullheaded twice. Furious gazes front and back, a vengeful Janus-looking. Excess of passion finds form in orgy of bodies, in flesh pierced and torn. All abandon. Still Dionysos asserts.

Chop once more. Brutal gesture to allay the frenzy. A vital incision into lawless abandon, a second head chop, a second intervention attempting to draw back to the delicate suspension. Tension of determinate and indeterminate politics finds form in Acéphale. The determination of obligation violated in killing strike finds crude emblem in blade held aloft. Indeterminate passion of revolutionary abandon finds its most apposite form in the burning heart of passion. Each such correlation washed through by heart, by the passionate overflow of the relation to the other, an exposure

that overloads the dissymmetrical incommensurable. A power to compose the more than one into the beating heart of a community rather than the loose association of abstraction. Heart beats as driving force, then modulated by established senses of politics: determinate or indeterminate.

Acéphale-Dionysos, passionate overflow. The lawless heart breaks suspension and runs away with itself. Only resolution: the brutal conclusion of another head chop.

Left on the ground a solitary bullhead, scraped-clean skull suspended between its horns, burning with the incandescent beat of a flame.

# OBELISK II

Arisen, up to feet, figure turns. Obelisk looms behind.

A few steps forward, then foot catches fragment of stone, kicking it across the concrete plane. A small remnant sent scattering.

Steps continue.

A cough, splutter, then guttural ejection spat down.

Spit lump strikes scattered stone. Beautiful symmetry.





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